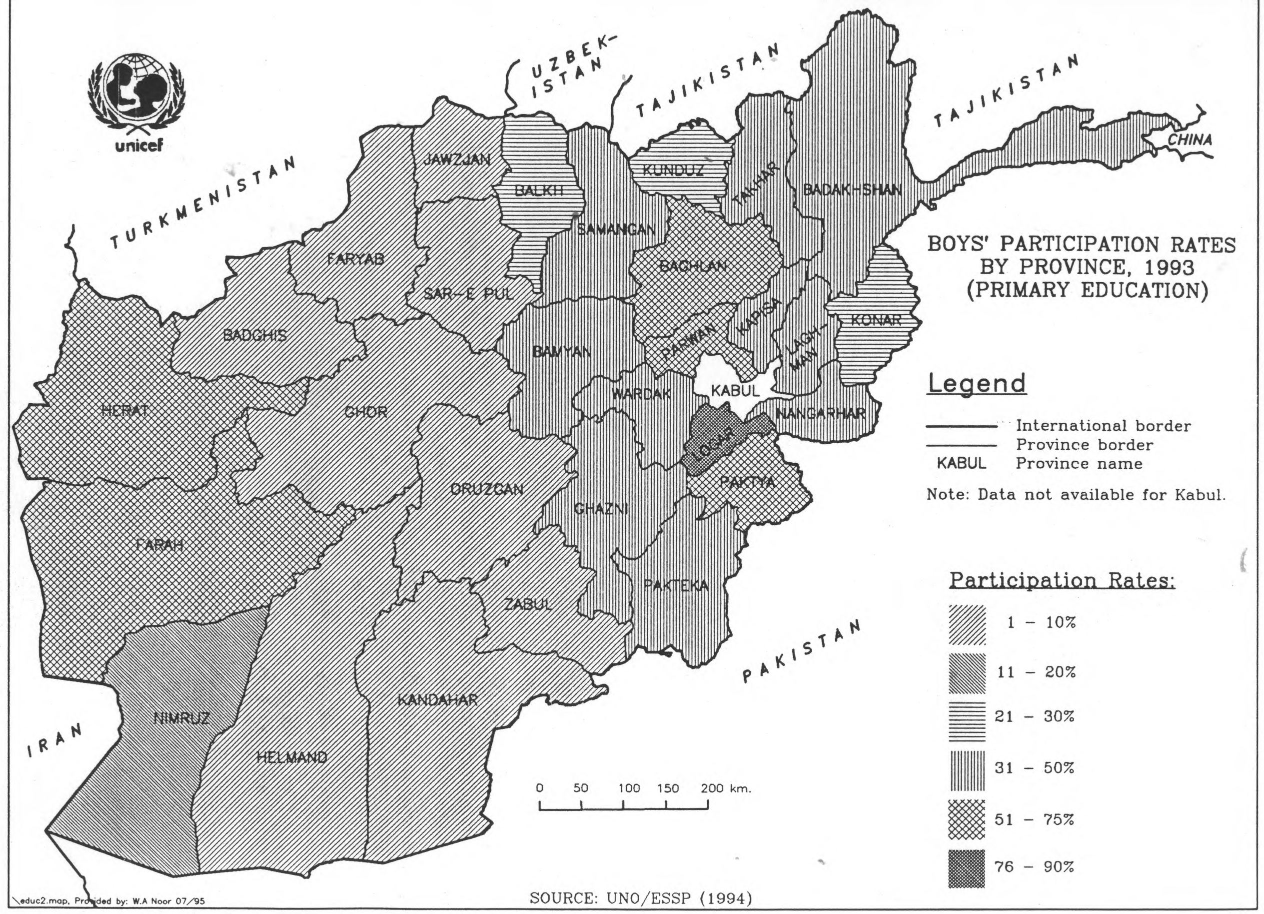

BOYS' PARTICIPATION RATES
BY PROVINCE, 1993
(PRIMARY EDUCATION)
unicef
TURKMENISTAN
UZBEK-ISTAN
TAJIKISTAN
TAJIKISTAN
CHINA
PAKISTAN
IRAN
JAWZJAN
BALKH
KUNDUZ
TAKHAR
BADAK-SHAN
SAMANGAN
FARYAB
SAR-E PUL
BAGHLAN
KONAR
BADGHIS
BAMYAN
PARWAN
KAPISA
LAGH-MAN
KABUL
HERAT
GHOR
WARDAK
NANGARHAR
LOGAR
PAKTYA
ORUZGAN
GHAZNI
FARAH
PAKTEKA
ZABUL
NIMRUZ
KANDAHAR
HELMAND
Legend
International border
Province border
KABUL Province name
Note: Data not available for Kabul.
Participation Rates:
1 - 10%
11 - 20%
21 - 30%
31 - 50%
51 - 75%
76 - 90%
0 50 100 150 200 km.
educ2.map, Provided by: W.A Noor 07/95
SOURCE: UNO/ESSP (1994)

2.5 EFFICIENCY

Efficiency refers to the extent to which children pass through the education system in the time expected. Proxies for efficiency are repetition, dropout and completion rates. These indicators provide important information about the internal efficiency of the education system. Internal efficiency is linked to the quality of education. When repetition rates and dropout are high, and few children complete primary schooling, children learn little and educational investment is wasted.

2.5.1 Repetition

Data on repetition are not available. Similarly, there are no data on attendance. Anecdotal evidence suggests attendance is irregular. Perhaps 50-70 percent of registered students attended the first semester examination in urban schools in Mazar-i-Sharif when this consultant visited. In urban schools in Herat, attendance appeared high during the first shift, but some schools visited during the third late afternoon shift made a fairly desolate impression. If the annual exams are taken seriously, and attendance is as poor as it seems, then it is likely that repetition rates are high.

2.5.2 Dropout

The dropout rate in Afghanistan was officially claimed as 11 percent for the first four grades in 1988 (UNDP, 1993). These figures underestimate the true situation. A UNICEF consultant analysed information from student registers in Kabul schools and found a drop-out rate of 50 percent in grade one and 15-20 percent in other grades in 1989 (UNICEF, 1989).

TABLE 3 SELECTED PRIMARY GRADE ENROLMENTS, 1993

	Grade 1		Grade 2		Grade 3		Grade 6	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
URBAN								
Male	42,036	100	25,407	60	23,217	55	14,250	34
Female	14,549	100	7,851	54	6,528	45	3,033	21
RURAL								
Male	124,849	100	85,159	68	71,477	57	34,061	27
Female	11,152	100	6,071	54	4,765	43	1,623	15
ALL	192,550	100	124,488	65	105,987	55	52,976	28

Source: UNO/ESSP, 1994

Table 3 shows enrolment for grades one, two, three and six for 1993. These figures do not reflect a longitudinal tracking of cohorts. At best they give an indication of dropout and completion rates. The highest dropout for girls occurs between grades one and two: there are only 54 girls in grade two for every 100 in grade one. This happens both in urban and rural schools. For boys, the highest drop-out takes place between grades one and three; out of 100 boys in grade one, 57 are enrolled in grade three.

2.5.3 Completion

It is likely that only children who complete primary school attain some sort of functional literacy. Twenty eight students enrolled in grade 6 for every 100 students enrolled in grade 1. The situation is most serious for rural girls. In rural schools, only 15 girls are enrolled in grade 6 for every 100 girls in grade 1. It should be noted that many rural schools do not offer the full primary programme. Urban boys have the best survival rates, 34 boys are enrolled in grade 6 for 100 in grade 1. With low completion rates and very high dropout in the early grades, it is questionable whether any but a minority of children develop acceptable standards of literacy.

2.5.4 Continuation to the next level

It is crucial for sufficient numbers of children to move to higher stages of education, otherwise education will not contribute significantly to the country's development. In Afghanistan, there is a lack of schools at the higher stages. Most opportunities for middle and secondary education are provided in the urban areas. This urban bias implies a long term lack of trained personnel for rural areas.

The number of primary graduates continuing to middle school are small. In 1993, of 29 boys in grade 6, there are 18 (62 percent) in grade 7 (the first grade of middle school). For girls, these figures are 18 and 14 (78 percent) respectively.

2.6 EFFECTIVENESS

The effectiveness of education programmes is measured by the levels of student achievement. In Afghanistan, there is a lack of exam data or other proxies that directly demonstrate the impact of schooling on learning acquisition. Effectiveness and efficiency are inter-related. The indicators for efficiency examined in the previous section imply that levels of learning acquisition are low.

2.7 EDUCATION PROVIDERS

Education in Afghanistan is provided through government, as wellas through international and Afghan NGOs. Some NGOs and for example an important agency like UNICEF do not provide educational opportunities, but support government schools with textbooks, supplies and teacher training[4]. This section provides an overview of the major education providers and how education is managed. Other major support programmes are discussed under the appropriate sections in this report. A brief summary of most agency programmes is provided in annex 7.

2.7.1 Government agencies

Government education structure consists of a Ministry of Education, with a separate Ministry of Higher Education. A General Director for Primary Education is in charge of all matters pertaining to the primary level. In principle, everyone of the 29 provinces has a President of Education, responsible for carrying out centrally-determined policies and administering finances allocated by the central Government. Provincial Education Presidents are responsible to the Provincial Governor as well as the Education minister in Kabul. Although provincial structures are similar, in some provinces they are more elaborate. District education offices exist in many administrative districts.

The Government bureaucracy was always highly centralized and control, rather than service, oriented. It has retained these characteristics (UNICEF, 1992). On the other hand, the strengths of this system lie in a fairly well articulated structure of decision making and compliance. In 1992, many civil servants left or were replaced, in some cases by non-technical staff. This reduced the management capacity of the Ministry of Education and many provincial departments. Subsequently, links of many provincial education departments with the centre were severed as a corollary to the political fragmentation of the country. The Ministry of Education was unable to function due to fighting and instability in Kabul. De facto provincial education departments were on their own. Anecdotal evidence suggests that in many provinces departments have almost completely stopped functioning. An example of a strong provincial education department is that of Herat.

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[4] Most agencies are not specialized education agencies, but support schools in the geographical areas where they implement programmes, usually rural rehabilitation programmes. At present there are upwards of 28 voluntary agencies and 3 UN agencies involved in education.

Presently, the situation in Kabul is relative stable, and there is a new Minister of Education who is making efforts to revitalise and professionalise the Ministry of Education. This creates opportunities for addressing rehabilitation needs, at least in secure areas that are within central government control.

2.7.2 Other providers

During the years of war, voluntary agencies supported cross-border education programmes in the liberated rural areas. In 1990, eleven agencies supported some 1,837 schools with teachers' salaries, student supplies and textbooks. This is a substantial number when compared to the fact in the same year, some 600 primary schools were under government administration. The major agencies involved were the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan (SCA), UNO/ESSP and Muslim Aid. These last two agencies have since phased out their programmes. Currently, 846 schools are managed by various agencies. Annex 5 shows the geographical distribution of schools supported for 1991 and 1995. Assuming a total of approximately 2,500 to 3,000 primary schools in Afghanistan[5], NGOs operate roughly between 25 and 30 percent of schools in the country. This is a significant proportion.

The NGO programmes are administered in a decentralized fashion. At present, the two main actors are the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan who is supporting 642 schools, and the Afghan Development Administration (ADA) who is operating 122 schools. Eight other agencies support a total of 100 schools.

The Swedish Committee for Afghanistan (SCA), presently the major NGO in the education sector, supports 642 primary schools in 16 provinces. SCA negotiates its programmes locally with independent commanders or village *shura* (councils). SCA works through a project structure. Project representatives selected from the local community and paid by SCA are responsible for supervising SCA schools in an area. Villages have the responsibility for deciding the employment of teachers. The organization has a regional set up. Each of their three regional offices has an education team, including inspectors and teacher trainers to support the schools and the project representatives. A small education team in Peshawar has a supporting, monitoring and advisory role. Since 1992 SCA deals increasingly with civil administrations. SCA also works in health, rural engineering and agriculture.

The Afghan Development Association (ADA) operates 122 schools in three provinces in southwest Afghanistan and in Wardak province. ADA maintains a head office in Peshawar, and provincial offices in Afghanistan. School monitors are responsible for the education programme. ADA provides textbooks, supplies, teacher salaries, and sets up school agricultural and horticultural plots. ADA is also involved in irrigation rehabilitation, horticulture, and veterinary services.

2.8 EDUCATION INPUTS

This section discusses the major inputs to education. The first sub-section reviews internal and external financing. Subsequent sections deal with school facilities, school equipment, supplies and textbooks. Separate sub-sections are included for teachers, teacher training, curriculum development, teaching aids, and assessment. These relate most directly to issues of quality.

2.8.1 Financing

Internal financing: Financing of education is the responsibility of the central government. There are no recent data available on government budgets or expenditures for education. Since 1992 many provincial education departments have received funds erratically and have had to pay staff in arrears, or have made partial payments. No funding is provided for other recurrent costs, or for development outlays. Fragmentation, due to factional conflict, has resulted in some provinces being completely cut off from central government funding in recent years. Where provincial revenues

[5] This figure is extrapolated from Table 1.

are generated, there is no evidence to show that education receives a share. It is clear that education funding is inadequate.

Teacher salaries are a major issue. The value of government salaries has been eroded to far under subsistence levels, due to high inflation and price hikes. In provinces that no longer receive central government fiscal support, there are indications that schools are closing as a result. Inadequate remuneration and non-payment are both detrimental to teacher motivation, retention, and to attracting and securing a future teacher supply.

Teachers' Salaries

In northern provinces not allied with the central government, civil servants have not been paid since early 1994. In 1995, teachers living in the cities received two months salary with newly printed currency, immediately driving up inflation and further reducing the real value of the salary. In Mazar-i-Sharif a month's salary of a teacher is not sufficient to purchase even a can of cooking oil.

Several provinces in the southwest and south now face a similar situation. In many places teachers continue teaching, hoping that a future central government will pay all arrears. Others reportedly only come to schools to sign attendance registers, or fail to turn up altogether. In Mazar-i-Sharif, female teachers, who have no alternative income earning opportunities, still come to school.

What will happen if teachers' salaries will be ceased for another year? The women say they will continue teaching the children. Many male teachers are not sure. "We have to feed our families. How can we stay?"

Any Afghan government will have to explore sustainable sources of financing basic education. Alternative sources for financing education, however, are not simple or obvious. NGOs are discussing strategies for mobilizing community resources to finance education. Small scale experiments with cost recovery strategies and self-financing have not yet yielded definitive results. The most obvious constraint is the pervasive poverty of most Afghan communities, and the difficulty for families to invest scarce family resources in children's education. Also, free education has been a consistent policy of government, and Afghans resist the notion of beneficiary contributions as an assault on their rights. Most provincial government departments lack the perspective and experience to mobilize parent or wider community support, since they assume the central government provision is guaranteed. The extremely limited financial resource base of the central government poses a major constraint for rehabilitation and development of the education sector.

External financing: The combined education budget of NGOs, UNESCO and UNICEF is in the order of 6.2 million US dollars for 1995 (SCA, 1995), of which to date 3.76 million US dollars is confirmed. This figure excludes school construction activities implemented by agencies as part of physical infrastructure rehabilitation projects, and in-kind contributions of Food-for-Work provided by WFP to teachers in camps for displaced people.

Table 4 MAIN DONOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO EDUCATION (CONFIRMED) in US$, 1995

DONOR	CONTRIBUTION (US$)	% OF TOTAL
Europian Union	1,173,000	31%
SIDA	1,044,000	28%
UNICEF	755,000	20%
Others	790,000	21%
TOTAL	3,762,000	100%

Source: SCA, 1995

Similar comparative budget information is not available for previous years. A major education support programme for Afghanistan phased out in 1994. This makes it likely that the level of overall education funding has decreased since last year. However, individual education agencies report increased activity and budgets this year compared to 1994. Education is not a funding priority for many donors, given the emergency and rehabilitation needs in key sectors as food production, water, sanitation and health.

2.8.2 School Facilities

War has devastated much of the school infrastructure. Data for 1993 (UNO/ESSP, 1994) indicate that only four out of every 10 schools are in buildings. In order to provide facilities to all schools, approximately 1,300 new schools would need to be constructed. Many existing buildings need rehabilitation or major repairs. This requires investments Afghanistan is not able to afford.

School buildings obviously offer shelter and protection from the weather, but do not determine the quality of teaching and learning. What alternatives are used? Many village schools are in the open air, others utilize alternative facilities such as mosques and *hujras*[6] SCA organizes girls' classes in the homes of female teachers, ensuring a secluded environment that meets parents' concerns for the safety of young children, especially girls. A joint UNICEF/CARE project requires that the community provides a place for the school as a precondition for launching a village community school. Tents offer a solution as emergency schools, and are used for example in the camps for the displaced near Jalalabad, and in Kabul where buildings were destroyed.

In cities like Herat, Kabul and Mazar-i-Sharif, many schools are used by hundreds or even thousands of children every day in two or three shifts. In these cases, it is more difficult to organize instruction without school buildings. A number of agencies now support school construction in areas that are relatively secure. For example, the Danish Committee for Aid to Afghan Refugees (DACAAR), has rebuilt many urban and some rural schools in Herat province.

Only a few schools have access to safe water and sanitary facilities. UNICEF, and other agencies involved in urban rehabilitation, improve wells, and provide handpumps to urban schools and other public buildings, and in some cases construct latrines.

2.8.3 Equipment and supplies

Furnishings: Furnishings in schools are non-existent or sparse. In both urban and rural schools students normally sit on the floor. In some urban schools, children sit on broken furniture. Usually there is no table or chair for the teacher. Furniture disappeared from the urban schools to be used as fuel or sold as scrap-metal. In the majority of rural schools furniture was never available. Many schools lack blackboards. In other schools, blackboards are broken or have lost all paint.

Teaching aids: Teaching aids are scarce. Some schools have some teaching aids developed by agencies like UNO/ESSP. However, these are often used to decorate the teachers' room and are rarely used in the classroom. Voluntary agencies would like to provide more teaching aids, but are constrained by lack of funding.

Classroom and student supplies: Many schools lack the basics of chalk, and supplies like paper, attendance books. Stationary is expensive for most parents, and many children come to schools without for example slates, pencils or notebooks. UNICEF and voluntary agencies are the main suppliers of such inputs. Of an estimated one million primary students, some three quarters will receive supplies:

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[6] Community or extended family guesthouse for visitors.

- **UNICEF**[7] is supplying Edukits to more than 400,000 students in government primary schools in all regions of Afghanistan. Since 1994, Edukit activities are implemented through the provincial education departments. An additional 100,000 students in Kabul will also receive supplies. Edukits contain blackboards, chalk, notebooks and other stationary items for students and teachers, and items for general school use. The kit also contains the Facts-for-Life book as a resource for teachers. UNICEF organises workshops for teachers on how to make simple teaching aids with the kit materials.

- Upwards of ten NGOs are providing school equipment, classroom and student supplies to another 280,000 children in 1995. Forty five thousand of these will be girls.

2.8.4 Textbooks

At the primary level, students require four to eight books, depending on grade level. Few textbooks are available in schools. For example, students possessed an average of two textbooks in 12 out of 28 provinces in 1993. The average number of textbooks per student was less than four in all provinces (UNO, 1994). Until 1994, the UNO/ESSP printed and distributed large numbers of books for schools in Afghanistan. Currently, there is no authority with funds to print and distribute books for the whole country. Voluntary agencies plan to print books for 280,000 primary students in the schools they support this year. SCA distributes books to additional students in some government schools in the provinces where they work. Most government schools, including all urban schools, will not receive books. In Herat perhaps half of the children possess books at present, but there are hardly any textbooks in schools in Kabul and Mazar-i-Sharif.

How do teachers manage? Teachers' strategy is often to write out lessons onto the blackboard for children to make manuscript copies. This sometimes takes most of the instructional time and is difficult for the early grades. Lack of notebooks and high cost of stationary to parents also limits this option. Schools also collect books at the end of the year, and redistribute them to the next classes.

An instructional programme without the basics of textbooks cannot achieve its central goal of student learning. Members of the ACBAR Education Sub-committee[8] have offered to assist the Ministry of Education to prepare a proposal for textbook printing and distribution. The proposal will be submitted to donors.

Printing Capacity: The Ministry printing press in Kabul is no longer functioning. IRC operates a printing press in Peshawar, and recently established a second one in Jalalabad. The IRC press used to print the UNO/ESSP textbooks for Afghanistan. It still prints school books for the Afghan refugee schools in NWFP and books and materials for other Afghan programmes. In future, the IRC press expects to move entirely to Afghanistan and be available as printing press for the government. IRC also has silk screen printing capacity in Peshawar and Jalalabad. UNICEF recently found that the Literacy Department's printing press in Kabul is still intact, but needs a generator and supplies to get started again.

2.8.5 Teachers

The base of teachers was reduced during the war. In 1978 data show 30,500 primary teachers. An estimated 2,000 teachers were killed. Thousands of others fled the country or moved to urban areas. The statistical data presented in

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7 UNICEF is able to cover many regions through its strong regional network with decentralised offices in Jalalabad, Mazar-i-Sharif, Kabul, Faizabad, Kandahar and Herat.

8 ACBAR, the Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief, is coordinating rehabilitation and development efforts of voluntary agencies in Afghanistan. Through the ACBAR Education Sub-Committee agencies involved in education coordinate on major issues, share resources and ideas, and work towards standardisation in curricula, salary subsidies, teacher training and materials, etc.

table 5 indicate a reduction of primary teachers by half between 1978 and 1990. Since 1990 numbers have increased. In 1993, UNO/ESSP reports nearly 23,000 teachers in the country (annex 3 shows changes over time by province). In 1995, the Ministry of Education reports nearly 12,000 teachers (from all levels) in Kabul. These data taken together suggest that current numbers of teachers may be back at pre-war levels.

TABLE 5 MALE AND FEMALE TEACHERS IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS, 1978 - 1993

YEAR	MALE #	%	FEMALE #	%	TOTAL #
1978	25,438	83	5,064	17	30,502
1990[1]	6,725	43	8,874	57	15,599
1990[2]	2,000	-	-	-	-
1993[3]	20,055	87	2,937	13	22,992

[1] excludes teachers in agency schools
[2] teachers in agency schoos
[3] excludes Kabul teachers

Source: 1978 and 1990 data: UNDP, 1994; 1993 data: UNO/ESSP

Ideally, a primary teacher follows two years of pre-service teacher training after completing secondary school. This has never been feasible. A pragmatic solution has been to hire untrained teachers, and lower entry qualifications to grade 9. The Ministry of Education estimated that in 1990 only one third of primary teachers were academically qualified and trained (UNICEF, 1993). Data for 1993 show that a quarter of all teachers have a middle school certificate (UNO/ESSP, 1994). No data are available about the pool of middle and secondary school graduates from which teachers can be recruited to expand primary education. Anecdotal evidence and common sense suggest that this pool is inadequate. In addition, the conditions of service are so poor, that available middle or high school graduates are not attracted to the teaching profession.

Teacher distribution is uneven in Afghanistan. Outside of Kabul female teachers are mostly available in the towns of Herat, Mazar-i-Sharif and north eastern provinces of Badakshan, Baghlan, Kunduz and Samangan. Fourteen provinces have fewer than 25 female teachers and in eleven of these provinces the numbers are negligible, between 0 and 5 in 1993 (UNO/ESSP, 1994). Like in many other Islamic societies, female teachers are usually required to teach girls. For example, in Paktia province, community selected male teachers teach mixed gender classes in a community based, non formal, primary education project supported by UNICEF and CARE. Most secondary schools are located in urban centres. There are few secondary schools for girls. The inadequate supply of rural teachers, and especially female teachers, will be one of the major constraints to expanding primary education.

2.8.6 Teacher training

Teacher training is provided in government teacher training colleges and through voluntary agencies working from Pakistan. Both types of programmes and their capacities are briefly reviewed in this section.

1. Government teacher education programmes:

Training programmes of Teacher Training Colleges underwent a number of changes in course duration and content. Presently, they offer two types of primary level certification programmes: a "pre-service course" for those who are not yet teaching, and an "in-service" course for those who are.

The duration of the pre-service course is two years. Entry qualification is a completed secondary education (grade 12). Entry qualification for the in-service courses is a middle schools diploma (grade 9), and some teaching experience. Course duration is five years. Participants teach in the morning and follow classes in the afternoon. Both courses award the same teacher training certificate. There are syllabi for the courses, but no course materials. Instructors teach from lecture notes. Hence, the usefulness of these courses in preparing teachers is in question.

2. In-service courses:

Voluntary agencies have chosen in-service teacher training as a major strategy for improving the quality of classroom instruction. The International Rescue Committee (IRC), Solidarité Afghanistan (SOS/PG*Belgium), and the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan are the main agencies that offer short inservice courses in Afghanistan. These agencies plan to train 3,145 teachers and headmasters in Afghanistan in 1995, including 617 women. Another 600 teachers will be trained by other agencies. The agencies cooperate in the sharing of training materials, the improvement of programmes and delivery strategies, and in working towards a standardisation of training inputs. ACBAR maintains a computerised data-base of teachers trained since 1992.

Swedish Committee for Afghanistan: SCA will train 995 teachers and 270 headmasters in 16 provinces in 1995. SCA provides training for teachers working in the schools SCA operates. Training is offered through three permanent teacher training centres attached to their regional offices. Every office has a team of teacher trainers, including one female trainer.

The International Rescue Committee (IRC) will train 420 government primary teachers and 100 heads of school in four provinces neighboring Pakistan. The agency has Pakistan based training teams that travel to Afghanistan. IRC also has expertise in training for secondary schools, and has trained substantial numbers of Afghan refugee teachers. The agency will also support some 300 schools with textbooks, school and student supplies.

Solidarité Afghanistan (SOS/PG*Belgium) has Pakistan based "mobile pedagogical teams" that travel to Afghanistan. The agency expects to train 1,360 teachers in 1995 in ten provinces, including teachers in schools supported by the Afghan Development Association in the underserved southwestern provinces. SOS/PG has also trained substantial numbers of refugee teachers in Pakistan.

The in-service courses organized by voluntary agencies show many similarities, as organisations have "borrowed" from each other to develop their own programmes. All agencies have developed programmes to upgrade deficient subject content knowledge. Courses include teaching methodology, classroom management, general education and child development theory. All programmes emphasize interactive teaching methods. School administration courses are offered for heads of school. Other courses train teachers how to use specific instructional materials, and develop lesson plans. The duration of the courses varies from one week to two months. As the programmes have not been formally compared and evaluated, it is not possible to make any comparative statement about the quality of the programmes, and the impact they have on teaching practices and student learning.

Agencies have developed a variety of teacher training manuals. UNESCO is currently collaborating with GTZ/BEFARe to develop training modules for school administrators on management of primary schools "under stress", and multi-grade teaching methodologies (UNESCO, 1995).

Many of the training opportunities for Afghan primary school teachers have been made available to refugees. Agencies have trained approximately 12,000 Afghan teachers in Pakistan. In Afghanistan more than 3,500 teachers, including 600 women, were trained by the UNO/ESSP over the life of its programme.

Capacity of training institutions

There are sixteen teacher training colleges in Afghanistan. Twelve offer pre-service certification courses for primary and middle schools. These institutes also have in-service departments. Four are so-called Higher Teacher Training Colleges. These are located in Kabul, Herat, Mazar-i-Sharif and Jalalabad. In addition, these colleges offer several pre-service and in-service degree courses to prepare teachers for secondary schools. The secondary programmes should serve the regions.

The Government reported an enrolment of 6,200 students in 1991. No comprehensive data are available about the present pre-service training capacity and actual enrolments of these institutes. Some sources suggest that a number of institutes are no longer functioning. The four Higher Teacher Training Colleges report a combined enrolment of 3,050 students in 1995. In Herat only 50 students are registered in the pre-service primary programme and 40 in the in-service course. In Mazar-i-Sharif there are 60 students enrolled in the in-service primary certificate course, and none in the pre-service course due to lack of interest.

In at least two colleges, very few students are preparing for teaching assignments at the primary level. If this holds true for other colleges as well, it indicates that there is a shortage of trained primary teachers, even to meet moderate increases in primary enrolments.

2.8.7 Curriculum development

The actors in curriculum development for education in Afghanistan are the Department of Curriculum Development and Textbook Compilation in the Ministry of Education in Kabul and the Education Project for Afghanistan (EPA). In Pakistan the bilateral GTZ/BEFARe project has developed instructional materials for Afghan refugee schools supported by UNHCR and the Government of Pakistan.

The Department of Curriculum Development and Textbook Compilation
This department was responsible for curriculum development until 1992. Since the fighting in Kabul ceased in March 1995 the department has resumed its activities and works closely with the EPA (see below).

The Education Project for Afghanistan (EPA)
Currently, the Education Project for Afghanistan (EPA) is officially in charge of curriculum and instructional material development, and coordination of printing on behalf of the Ministry. This voluntary agency is a remnant of the former UNO/ESSP. EPA coordinates its activities closely with the Department of Curriculum Development and Textbook Compilation.

In the late 1980s, UNO/ESSP financed and provided technical support to the Education Council of Afghanistan (ECA) to develop curriculum and textbooks. The Education Council of Afghanistan (ECA) was the education wing of the multi-party alliance based in Peshawar[9]. This body was vested with the authority to develop a curriculum for the schools in the liberated rural areas in Afghanistan. These textbooks were approved for the country and for Afghan refugee children in Pakistan, first by the Afghan Interim Government in Peshawar in 1990, and again by the Ministry of Education in Kabul after the change of government in 1992. The books have undergone several revisions since then..

The EPA only receives funding for maintaining an office in Peshawar. As staff are not paid, only a few individuals are still working. The EPA has draft teacher guides on file, that are keyed to the textbooks. Scope and sequence charts were developed for mathematics, language arts and science. Currently EPA is revising the textbooks on request of the Ministry of Education to replace references to war by messages of peace and unity.

[9] This was an alliance of seven main political parties opposing the Kabul government. This alliance later formed an Interim Afghan Government based in Pakistan, which moved to Kabul in 1992.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Afghanistan has been in a continuous state of war and civil strife since 1978. As a direct consequence of the conflict, over one million people have been killed, more than half a million were disabled, six million fled as refugees to neighboring Pakistan and Iran and some two million were internally displaced. The country has some of lowest social and economic indicators in the world, including those for education.

Sixteen years of fighting has virtually destroyed the social and economic infrastructure, which was already inadequate before the onset of war. Schools, health centres, roads and bridges were extensively damaged. Industry, trade and commerce have gradually declined over the years. The country remains heavily mined. For most of the past 16 years it was the rural areas which suffered from fighting and destruction whereas the urban areas under the Kabul-based regime kept at least a semblance of normalcy. After the installation of the Islamic government in 1992, the urban services were also seriously disrupted.

National health indicators for children reveal the gravity of the situation. The infant mortality rate in 1993 was estimated at 165 per 1,000 live births and the under-five mortality rate at 257 per 1,000 births. Literacy rates are amongst the lowest in Asia. Adult literacy was estimated at 29 percent, but only at 14 percent for women.

In the beginning of 1994, heavy fighting broke out again in the capital, Kabul. Elsewhere, the widespread factional fighting, which had started in 1992, largely ceased by mid-1994. It is only very recently, since April 1995, that Kabul has experienced a period of calm and relative stability.

In this context, the pre-conditions necessary for the implementation of comprehensive Education for All programmes were lacking in 1990 and are still lacking today. As Article 10 of the World Declaration on Education for All states:

"... Only a stable and peaceful environment can create conditions in which every human being, child and adult alike, may benefit from the goals of this declaration."

The fact that education is still provided in some fashion in many parts of the country, can be considered a major achievement.

1.2 Scope of the Report

Whereas under normal situation the Mid-Decade Review of Progress toward Education for All provides feedback on progress made in the past five years, Afghanistan has been in a state of war and unrest during this period. For this reason, the purpose of this report is to assess the current status of education in Afghanistan in relation to its pre-war status, and to identify strengths and weaknesses which need to be considered in any long term effort to achieve EFA goals. The sub-sectors under review are primary education, Early Childhood Care and Development and adult literacy. The focus of this review is on primary education as it is the central means of meeting basic education needs in Afghanistan, as is the case in many other developing countries,. The Ministry of Education has objectives beyond these sub-sectors, and emphasizes the need for secondary and vocational training opportunities. These, however, are beyond the scope of this review, and might be looked into at a later date.

This report has three sections. The first is this introduction which contains the background, the scope of the report and the methodology. The second is a subsectoral review describing the current status of education provision in Afghanistan. The third section contains the conclusions, which are presented as an assessment of the current status with respect to EFA goals and Afghanistan's objectives for the education sector.

GTZ/Basic Education for Afghan Refugees (BEFARe)
BEFARe is a bilateral government project of the Federal Republic of Germany and Pakistan. The aim of the project is to improve basic education for Afghan refugees. The project has developed student workbooks, teacher guides and support materials in the subjects of Pashto and math for grades 1-4. These books are used in UNHCR funded Afghan refugee schools in Pakistan. GTZ/BEFARe promotes a child-centered teaching approach. The agency also has developed adult literacy materials, a Mother-and-Child Health course for women, and has expertise in teacher training. It is likely that an agency like GTZ might support the Afghan Ministry of Education once bilateral relations can be established.

The official government textbooks ("UNO books") have replaced the plethora of textbooks used previously in most schools in Afghanistan and Afghan refugee schools in Pakistan. The recent revision has made the books provisionally acceptable to voluntary agencies providing textbooks to Afghan schools. In the northern areas, under a more secular oriented leadership, the pre-1975 books are being used. These are extremely scarce, and only teachers possess copies. The UNO books were never accepted there.

CHILD-TO-CHILD HEALTH EDUCATION IN HERAT

In many countries Child-to-Child approaches have been successful in promoting health awareness in children, and in turning children into health teachers of siblings and parents. UNICEF is now introducing this methodology on a pilot basis to primary schools in Herat. The project builds on earlier school health education activities supported by UNICEF, organised around Facts-for-Life materials.

Two health educators, seconded by the education department and trained by UNICEF are overall responsible for the project, thus building the capacity of the provincial education department to implement health education programmes in schools. Fifteen class teachers of upper primary classes have been trained in Child-to-Child methodologies. They teach health education for one hour per week, using active teaching methods they have practiced during training. All teachers have received a folder containing Child-to-Child materials, which UNICEF adapted to the Afghan context and translated into Dari. Monthly workplans are prepared with supervisors, who monitor lessons, support the teachers, and conduct follow-up visits to parents. Teachers also maintain contact with families through visits and letters, to obtain parents' feedback and record impact of the programme on the health practices of families.

Initial feedback is promising. Teachers and students enjoy the lessons. Classrooms are full of teaching aids and drawings made by the children. Parents are pleased too, and all teachers have examples to give of families that have installed fly screens against mosquitoes, covered backyard surface wells, or now use ORS to treat diarrhoea in small children.

Language, religion and math are the main subjects at the primary level (see annex 8 for a syllabus). Depending on the region, either Dari or Pashto[10] are used as medium of instruction. From grade four onwards the second language is added as a subject. Health education is on the curriculum from grade 4 onwards. UNICEF is strengthening the health education component on a pilot basis through the introduction of the Facts-for-Life book as a resource to teachers. In Herat, UNICEF is testing a Child-to-Child programme in primary schools, addressing health, sanitation and environmental topics (see box on p. 20).

There are concerns among educators regarding the quality of the textbooks and relevance to children's lives. Especially for the early grades, the content is considered too abstract. The books give little support to teachers, provide very little practice for students, and invite rote memorisation methods. From a qualitative point of view, the books need further revision.

2.8.8 Teaching aids

Several agencies have developed teaching aids. The UNO/ESSP for example developed story books, alphabet and number charts on cloth. Supplementary reading materials, important to consolidate reading skills are hardly available. An interesting example is a small newspaper magazine produced by the NGO Partners for Social Development (PSD) for their schools in Ghazni province and in Pakistan. Another is "The Rainbow", a monthly educational magazine aimed at Afghan children, produced privately in Dari and Pashto on a non-profit basis by the Kabul English Language Centre in Peshawar.

2.8.9 Assessment

Educational assessment is important to determine school quality and efficiency and guide efforts to make quality improvements. Education assessment includes, inter alia, writing of assessment tests, setting of achievement standards for learning levels and testing student achievement levels. Field testing of instructional materials and training packages are also part of assessment. Results of testing programmes can be related to questions of supervision, curriculum, learning materials and teaching performance. Presently, there is no group that works on educational assessment.

2.9 SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMMES

This section deals with special education programmes. Early Childhood Care and Development programmes, education programmes for children in special circumstances such as refugees, displaced and disabled children are reviewed in the section. An interesting educational programme using radio as communication channel is included. The last sub-section deals with adult literacy programmes.

2.9.1 Early Childhood Care and Development (ECD) programmes

Early Childhood programmes are provided by the government in some of major cities. In Pakistan an interesting preschool programme exists for Afghan refugee children. These programmes are briefly summarized here. Some programmes for children at risk also include ECD components. These are described in the next section.

Government

In 1990, there were 270 preschools serving over 21,000 children in Afghanistan, with 2,300 teachers. As outlined in section 2.2 on education structure, these programmes serve working mothers' children between the ages of three months and 7 years. Most of these were located in urban centres. Information regarding their geographical distribution is not available. It ia probable that most pre-schools were located in Kabul. It is not clear how many of these pre-school

[10] The two official languages of Afghanistan.

institutions still exist in 1995. Urban services have deteriorated since 1992, so it is likely that numbers have declined. Loss of equipment and supplies from preschools is reported in for example Mazar-i-Sharif. Currently, UNICEF and WFP provide therapeutic and supplementary food to pre-schools and orphanages in Herat, Kabul and Mazar-i-Sharif (annex 9 provides a description of two of such preschools).

Kodakistan Education Programme

The Kodakistan Education Programme (KEP) in Peshawar is a project of the International Rescue Committee (IRC), assisted by the Bernard van Leer Foundation. KEP provides Afghan women with training and resources to set up culturally appropriate early childhood education centres for children between the ages of three months and 7 years. Twelve outreach pre-schools have been established by KEP graduates. The project offers professional support to teachers, develops materials, and translates appropriate pre-school education materials into Dari and Pashto.

2.9.2 Children in special circumstances

The effects of war have created large groups of Afghan children in special circumstances. An estimated six million Afghans settled as refugees in Pakistan and Iran in the 1980s. As many as 2.5 million Afghans are internally displaced. Large numbers of Afghan children have been disabled by mines and disabling childhood diseases such as poliomyelitis. War also created many orphans and fatherless children, who cannot always be absorbed by the traditional extended family system. International reports stress the potential of ECD programmes for families and children at risk. What educational opportunities and ECD programmes exist for these groups?

Internally displaced

No policy exists for the education of displaced children. During the 1980s, many children of families that migrated from rural to urban areas enrolled in existing schools. For the displaced from Kabul, camps were set up in Nangarhar and Balkh province. UN agencies and NGOs support schools in these camps, and several agencies cooperate in a programme designed to overcome war-related traumatic stress in children (see box).

STOP: A Child Mental Health Programme for Conditions of War

Several agencies cooperate successfully to implement community based child mental health programmes for children affected by war-trauma in the camps in Nangarhar province for displaced families from Kabul.

In a short training course, parents learn to become aware and recognise the psycho-social effects of war on children of different age-groups. The training also discusses the rights of children according to international charters. Parents are mobilised to organise culturally appropriate children's activities. These programmes employ the so-called STOP model. STOP stands for structure, talking, organized play, and parental support, all elements that in a synergistic manner help children to overcome their traumatic experiences by strengthening their psychological defenses and coping mechanisms.

As a result of the programme, parents have set up self-help schools and kindergartens for their children, organise traditional Afghan games, and are able to help their children within the family.

Refugees
In Pakistan, UNHCR and the Government of Pakistan have been providing educational opportunities in the refugee villages since the early 1980s. Voluntary agencies also support refugee education. Most of this education is for boys. In 1990, an estimated 50% of boys of primary school age in the refugees villages attended schools. Since repatriation started around 1990, some of these schools have been closed. The impact on participation rates has not been assessed. Many educated Afghans send their children to private schools in towns in Pakistan. In Iran, the majority of refugee children were absorbed into the Iranian school system. Afghan political parties also operated schools.

Street children
As a result of the fighting and closure of schools in Kabul, there has been an increase in the number of bored, restless children wandering about in the streets. Another group of children, predominantly boys from destitute, often fatherless families, have taken to the streets to contribute to their household's livelihood. They engage in such activities as petty trade, car washing, and begging. These two categories of street children can be found in several cities and towns throughout the country.

UNICEF supports five drop-in centres for street children in Kabul and several provincial towns. In the centres, children can rest, wash, eat, and are offered classes in literacy, numeracy and vocational training. Some 1,500 children make use of these centres on a regular basis.

Children with special needs - disabled children
With the large majority of primary school age children out of school, no specific attention is paid by the Government to the needs of disabled children. Two agencies, SCA and SERVE, as part of their community based disabled rehabilitation programs in the northern and northeastern provinces, integrate disabled children in schools when possible. The programmes also pay attention the rehabilitation and development needs of young disabled children. Interesting material developed by Rädda Barnen is a steel trunk, containing low-cost toys and child-stimulation materials. This material is used in the training of field workers, community volunteers and parents for work with young disabled children. Components of this and other initiatives have potential to be used on a wider scale in a variety of programmes targeting young children.

2.9.3 Education for better living

The BBC Afghan Education Drama (AED) radio project is an example of a programme that contributes to better living, and sound and sustainable development. The project was created in October 1993 with assistance from UNICEF and the BBC to address some of the basic education needs of a people beset by war. The project has attracted considerable attention, and is now supported by various donors. Major contributors are UNICEF, UNOPS, UNOCHA and WHO (see box).

The BBC Afghan Education Drama Project

"New Home, New Life" is a fictional story of Afghan villagers. The drama features two main extended families: one an Afghan family returned from Pakistan, trying to rebuild their lives in the village, the other a family that stayed on. Storylines educate listeners in an entertaining manner about a variety of social issues. A major thread running through he programme is primary health care. Examples of other topics woven through the story are mine awareness, drug awareness, girls' education, literacy and conflict resolution.

Experts from the main funding agencies are involved through a consultative process to ensure that the information conveyed is correct and solutions the villagers find to solve their problems realistic. The programme went on the air in April 1994, and evaluations show encouraging results. The project also produces a cartoon magazine with UNESCO support, which summarises the plot of the soap opera in pictures and simple words, so that" they are suitable for neo-literates. One use of the magazines is in health education courses for women. The project is able to produce special feature magazines, and is planning to produce an issue with basic health messages for children.

It is anticipated that the BBC's Afghan Education Drama project could significantly contribute to a growing reappraisal of radio's educational role in developing countries, particularly in conflict areas.

2.9.4 Adult Literacy

1. Literacy situation

Afghanistan has one of the lowest literacy rates in the world. The official literacy rate for men in 1970 was 13 percent, the rate for women 2 percent. In 1990, the official rates for the adult population were 44 percent for men, and 14 percent for women. These figures are held to be heavily inflated. UNO/ESSP estimated the female literacy rate in 1993 to be 5-7 percent at best, which is probably closer to the reality. For 1995, there are no official government figures available. There is little to assume that the literacy situation has improved since 1990.

2. Literacy programmes

Literacy programmes are organized by the government and by other agencies;

a. Government literacy programmes

Policy and management

After 1978, the government used non-formal education as a tool to promote literacy and the values of the new regime. These programmes were perceived to be undermining traditional values by many Afghans. The enforcement of female literacy campaigns sparked the exodus of many Afghans into exile. In the late 1980s, the political content of Government programmes diminished. After the World Conference on Education for All, new literacy programmes were developed and implemented. A literacy fund was opened to which organizations and individuals could contribute. Literacy courses were organised in government offices, schools, police stations, factories, etc.

A General President for Literacy Affairs, reporting to the Minister of Education, is responsible for non-formal adult education. Separate Adult Literacy Mass Campaign offices existed at provincial levels under the post-1978 regime, reporting directly to Kabul. These are now closed. A General Director under the provincial Presidents of Education is in charge of adult programmes. Some provincial Social Affairs Departments also organize literacy courses on a small scale for widows, in conjunction with skill training programmes.

Afghan observers report that there is no adult education section in some provinces. In other places, a delivery structure exists, and certain provinces such as Kabul, Herat and Balkh have active programmes.

Coverage

For 1991, government reports 50 literacy schools (35 in the provinces), 45 workers' literacy schools (22 in the provinces), 4 skill training cum literacy courses and 9 out of school children's literacy centers. Total enrolment in literacy courses was 269,089 (UNICEF, 1992). There is no national information available regarding the magnitude of programmes in 1995. In Kabul, Herat and Mazar-i-Sharif altogether 17,600 participants are reportedly enrolled in courses in 1995.

The types of government adult non-formal programmes are listed in section 2.2. Visits to programmes in Herat and Mazar-i-Sharif revealed:

- Motivated adult learners;
- A majority of female teachers;
- High participation of teenagers who missed out on formal education opportunities in adult literacy courses;
- A virtual absence of learning materials for participants. Often only the teachers have materials;
- Outreach of programmes constricted to towns;
- Opportunity for literacy instructors to discuss common problems and share experiences in weekly meetings.

o Enrolment of children younger than 9 years old in out-of-school children's education programmes. Programmes are used as substitute for primary education when no nearby school exists.

b. Other programmes

A number of voluntary agencies are involved in adult literacy programmes. UNICEF and UNESCO also support literacy activities. Programmes are expanding, but the numbers of participants remain modest. Most programmes have started only recently. In 1995, agencies plan to provide basic education opportunities to nearly 10,000 adults in Afghanistan, of which a third will be women. Courses include literacy and numeracy training, often in combination with basic health and vocational training. Agencies increasingly cooperate and share experiences to improve programmes.

o **UNICEF** is currently supporting government literacy programmes in various ways. In Kabul, Mazar and Herat UNICEF supports skill-cum-literacy training for widows organized by the Departments of Social Welfare. The Facts-for-Life book is used by the instructors to convey basic health messages. UNICEF has also developed functional literacy materials on primary health topics, and is testing these in 400 female literacy classes in Kabul.

o **UNESCO** is supporting literacy activities of several NGOs. In collaboration with SOS/PS*Belgium, UNESCO is supporting the development of functional literacy materials for rural settings.

o **AG BAS-Ed** is the NGO off-shoot of GTZ/BEFARe, and implements programmes in Afghanistan since the end of 1994. The organization plans to train up to 5,750 adults in four provinces neighbouring Pakistan in 1995, of which 1,250 will be women. GTZ/BEFARe is also piloting a non-formal shortened primary programme for out-of-school Afghan youth in Pakistan.

o **SCA** started conducting basic education programmes for women in 1993. These courses combine literacy, numeracy, basic health, religion and vocational training elements. SCA is using expertise and materials from a number of other agencies to set up these courses. In 1995, SCA plans to train 1,200 women in 16 provinces.

3. Quality of programmes and retention of literacy skills

Instructors: A completed 12th grade (secondary school) is the minimum qualification for a government literacy teacher. Teachers receive no training. NGOs provide some training to literacy instructors. The agency AG BAS-Ed, for example, provides a short training in how to use their materials. In Herat, instructors were observed employing lecture and repetition methods.

Materials: Literacy materials are scarce. In Herat and Mazar-i-Sharif, only instructors have copies. As materials appropriate for adult learners are lacking, teachers in both places use primary school books. Agencies use a variety of materials, including primary school books. The Pashto literacy and numeracy materials developed by GTZ/BEFARe are accompanied by detailed teacher guides and a set of teaching aids. These materials are used by a number of agencies in Pashto speaking areas. Various agencies are currently developing functional literacy materials.

Post-literacy materials: Many adults learn literacy skills in courses where only the teacher has a book. There is a dearth of reading material in general in Afghanistan. It can be assumed that most adults will not retain their literacy skills.

To make more reading materials available for literates, new literates and school graduates, the ACBAR Resource and Information Centre (ARIC) in Peshawar is developing a mobile box library on a pilot basis. A box library is a tin box with shelves inside, which can be easily carried and moved to different centres as required. The contents of the box libraries are drawn from ARIC's wide collection of Dari and Pashto books and booklets. Materials can include health and literacy aids, poetry, children's games, and simple manuals on topics such as bicycle repair, latrine construction,

and carpentry. GTZ/BEFARe has prepared a reader for neo-literates, and is developing additional teaching material for this group.

4. Demand

Currently there is demand for literacy training in many refugee communities and rural communities in Afghanistan. This is a divergence from the past. Literacy programmes for women are still contentious in many conservative communities. Also, the benefits of literacy are not apparent to many adults, especially women. Women can be often reached when basic health or skill training is combined with a literacy component. A motivation of many adult learners to enroll in literacy courses is to enhance religious knowledge, which has benefits for their spiritual well-being. Parity with school going children is a reason for many parents to enroll.

3 CONCLUSIONS

3.1 Strengths and weaknesses

The review of the developments in education in Afghanistan reveals a beleaguered system. In most parts of the country the system is minimally functioning, in others it has almost collapsed. Basic education provision in the country is heterogeneous and fragmented. The common denominator is that all schools and education programmes suffer from inadequate inputs in terms of textbooks, supplies, teacher quality, salaries, facilities and equipment. The system reaches only a minority of children. The participation rate for 1993 was estimated at 15.9 percent for the primary level. Girls are largely excluded from educational opportunities. The majority of children drop out before attaining sustainable literacy and numeracy levels.

There are serious constraints on the government's capacity to address quantitative and qualitative problems of the education system. However, the picture is not altogether bleak.

3.1.1 Strengths in the present situation

Current strengths that provide opportunities for addressing quantitative and qualitative problems in the education system include:

- current relative security and stability in many areas, including the capital;
- a Minister of Education intent on revitalizing education;
- conviction by many levels of society and across political dividing lines that education is a priority;
- a broad-based and increasing demand for education in some areas, including for girls;
- provincial education departments with strong, decentralised authority;
- highly motivated teachers in some areas, especially female teachers;
- experiences of agencies with straight forward service delivery despite difficult circumstances;
- examples of de-centralised approaches to providing education and mobilising community support for education;
- experiences of agencies with literacy and ECD approaches.

3.1.2 Weaknesses in the present situation

The weaknesses identified in this review include:

- government lacking control over certain areas;
- severe lack of offical resources available for education;
- limited planning, administration, supervision and management capacity ;
- collapsed provincial and district education administrations in some places;
- inadequate teacher supply, especially affecting rural and girls' education;
- lack of instructional materials and other needed supplies for basic education;
- questionable quality of educational inputs;
- need for almost completely new infrastructure;
- social constraints on girls' schooling.

3.2 Key issues

This section summarizes key quantitative and qualitative issues that emerged from the findings of the report.

3.2.1 Quantity issues

o **Targeting educationally disadvantaged groups**

There are wide gender, urban-rural and regional inequities in the provision of education. Currently, a broad-based demand for primary education for boys exists. Demand for girls' education exists too, though it is more limited. If conditions are favourable, enough demand exists to expand education services rapidly.

If one of the aims of an expansion programme would be to reduce inequities, then the priority listing in this report could be used to target regional interventions. Additional conditions for selecting areas for initial expansion might include security, high demand, teacher availability, secured salary payments, and presence of a functioning provincial or district department. Voluntary agencies with appropriate expertise might assist in conducting needs assessments. Voluntary agencies might also assist in expanding access, for example, in underserved areas where provincial departments have collapsed, or where funding is lacking to pay teachers' salaries. This would, however, require a long term commitment from the agency and its donor(s).

o **Making the best use of scarce resources**

The internal and external financial resources available for education are limited, and needs are vast. Expansion of educational opportunities to serve more children will strain resources further. Most schools lack basic educational items like textbooks, blackboards and chalk, and operate without school buildings. The lack of textbooks is currently a particularly pressing problem.

Under this emergency situation with funding, it is important to prioritise carefully to ensure that the maximum number of children are served with a good quality programme. Basic school items such as books, blackboards and chalk are essential. School buildings are helpful, but not crucial. Examples of existing cost-effective alternative arrangements are mosques, *hujras*, teachers' homes and tents. Donors may consider funding the printing and distribution of textbooks for the existing schools, which will have an immediate impact. However, textbooks constitute a recurrent cost, and means need to be found to replace books and serve expanding school populations.

o **Increasing teacher supply**

There is a lack of suitably qualified candidates to expand education, especially in rural areas and for girls' education. The remuneration of teachers is inadequate to retain teachers and attract new candidates.

Qualification requirements for school teachers could be lowered to, for example, a completed primary school, but obviously quality of teaching would suffer. Female teachers are mostly preferred for teaching girls, but some communities will accept male teachers. To increase the pool from which potential teachers can be drawn, and also to absorb more primary students as opportunities for primary education expand, more middle and secondary schools will be needed. Obviously, teacher supply is an issue at this level as well. Options to address the remuneration issue are not easily found. In areas where staff do not get paid it is now difficult to retain them let alone expand.

o **Increasing training capacity**

The current training capacity is inadequate to prepare sufficient candidates to expand educational opportunities.

There are 16 teacher training colleges for all provinces. Little is known about their capacity and actual enrolment levels. The colleges can probably only train a fraction of the teachers that are needed. Expansion might be needed to

train the teachers required to meet the demand for additional trained teachers, and cope with the backlog of untrained teachers. Inservice options, that provide short intensive training with follow up supervision and refresher courses could be considered. Such courses can be organized close to where teachers work and can be used to train untrained teachers in the system, and to prepare new teachers. Often such programmes are more cost-effective than institution based residential programmes. Voluntary agencies with experience in managing field based and mobile teacher training programmes might be involved.

3.2.2 Quality issues

The quantitative dimensions of the problem, - how to expand opportunities to the large numbers of out-of-school children, how to provide textbooks to children, etc. - are so immense that there is a danger that quality concerns could be forgotten. Student learning is the central aim of education programmes and, therefore, quality concerns should be addressed. A critical issue is that of learning materials which convey the content of learning and mold the way teachers will teach. Improved learning materials will have a greater impact than will buildings or training. Expanding without working simultaneously on making adjustments to improve quality is wasteful in the long term.

o **Focusing the education system**

At present, the education system lacks standard learning levels expected of students. There is a need for clear and specific learning objectives agreed upon by Afghan educators to focus all parts of the education system; curriculum, textbooks, training and assessment. A first step might be to develop a simple booklet of minimum learning objectives for primary education, for use by educational institutions, teacher training colleges, curriculum developers, etc.

o **Developing high quality instructional materials**

A first need is to provide schools with textbooks. However, the books contain qualititative weaknesses and require further revision to improve them and to focus them on learning objectives. This is particularly urgent for the early grades where dropout is highest. Development of teacher guides, basic charts, and supplementary reading materials are complementary and essential for an effective quality programme. Some of this work has already been done, and there are Afghan experts in this area in EPA and GTZ/BEFARe.

o **Improving teacher training**

Poor teacher subject knowledge, and poor teaching and classroom management practices are the norm in Afghan classrooms. Teacher training needs to be assessed to determine strengths and weaknesses in improving teaching practices and student learning. Improvements to teacher training programmes (whether executed by government or external agencies) would need to address questions such as the subject matter of training, appropriate duration, how to support educational objectives and instructional materials, methods for communicating curricula, etc. Again, the minimum learning objectives would be the reference for such reforms.

o **Developing education assessment capacity**

A gap in the current education system is the lack of an educational assessment programme. To accomplish learning objectives, it is necessary to address quality concerns through an institution that coordinates activities, conducts focused studies to understand the problems, experiments with learning packages, tests new curricula, prepares new materials, does related teacher training programmes, and develops testing capacity to assess the learning achievements against set standards.

1.3 Methodology

To carry out this review, statistical information, reports and documents pertaining to education in Afghanistan, and other relevant resource documents were collected from various sources. Documentation was reviewed to enable comparison over time on key quantitative and qualitative indicators. Visits to Herat and Mazar-i-Sharif provided the opportunity to collect first-hand information regarding the current status of education in these two places. Semi-structured checklists were used to guide discussions with senior provincial education department officials, and to collect information regarding primary schools, pre-schools, teacher training institutes and literacy programmes in each location. Annex nine presents some field observations from these visits. A visit to the capital of Kabul was planned but could not be realised. Instead, the UNICEF Project Officer responsible for education interviewed key Ministry of Education staff in Kabul, including the Education Minister and Deputy Minister. Time and logistical constraints precluded visits to other regions. Major international and Afghan Non-Governmental Organizations and United Nations agencies providing education assistance in Afghanistan were consulted for their assessment of major issues in education in the country, and for information regarding their programmes.

3.3 Progress toward education goals

In the beginning of this report the EFA goals for Afghanistan were set out. The country intended, inter alia, to achieve universal access to primary education by the year 2000.

What would it take to achieve the central EFA goal of universal access to primary education in Afghanistan by the year 2000?

Data for 1993, which provide the baseline for projecting requirements show;

- enrolments of approximately 600,000 boys and 76,000 girls, representing participation rates of 26.8 for boys and 3.6 for girls;
- 2,200 existing primary schools ;
- 1,300 schools functioning without buildings;
- teacher corps of 20,000 male and nearly 3,000 female teachers;
- lack of basic supplies and textbooks in most schools;
- majority of untrained teachers in the system (UNO/ESSP, 1994).

The rough estimates presented below give a crude indication of the additional efforts required to achieve universal access to education[11] :

- enrolment increase of roughly 1.7 million boys and 2 million girls;
- recruitment and training of some 48,000 additional male and 57,000 extra female teachers (based on a student:teacher ratio of 35 to 1);
- opening of 12,000 new schools (in school buildings or alternative shelter arrangements);
- provision of basic equipment and supplies to these schools;
- printing of 7.5 million primary textbooks annually by the year 2000.

These goals are clearly unrealistic. If instead of universal access, reduced goals of 50 percent enrolment for boys, and 30 percent for girls are adopted, the following would be required:

- enrolment increase of approximately 520,000 boys and 600,000 girls;
- recruitment and training of approximately 15,000 male and 17,000 additional female teachers;
- opening of 3,800 schools;
- provision of basic supplies and equipment to these schools;
- printing of 4 million primary textbooks annually by the year 2000.

These goals may also be unrealistic in the context of Afghanistan. Nevertheless, as targets they are more workable, and could make the concerned actors push to accomplish as much as possible. The most immediate need is for funding and clear directives. Without funding it will be difficult to extend education to major parts in Afghanistan, much less to disadvantaged groups. Without clear direction it will be difficult to spend scarce resources wisely. The danger in this situation is that in the effort to expand education there will not be enough attention to quality. Without a quality programme children will enroll but they will learn little and are likely to drop out before acquiring literacy and numeracy skills. There is an opportunity in the current situation in Afghanistan to start again and build a quality programme and avoid problems other countries have experienced.

[11] UNO data for 1993 on schools and enrolments were used as baseline for the estimates. Since data for Afghanistan are not reliable to begin with, no attempt has been made to adjust for population growth. A weakness of the UNO data is the exclusion of Kabul figures. These estimates therefore are a very crude proxy intended only to give some idea of the magnitude of the effort required.

ANNEX 1 NUMBER OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS BY GENDER AND PROVINCE, 1978-1993

Region	Province	# of Boys Primary Schls 1978	1990	1993	# of Girls' Primary Schls 1978	1990	1993
North East	Badakshan	169	31	148	24	6	43
	Baghlan	96	19	121	19	2	17
	Kunduz	94	6	57	10	8	15
	Takhar	99	5	147	9	4	13
North	Balkh	152	28	44	28	8	9
	Faryab	100	27	3	48	18	0
	Jawzjan/ Saripul	117	44	30	9	3	1
	Samangan	86	8	76	10	2	16
West	Badghis	63	13	3	3	1	0
	Farah	98	20	43	9	4	7
	Herat	137	47	98	23	10	26
East Central	Bamyan	87	4	86	11	1	12
	Ghor	131	3	15	8	0	6
Central	Kabul	157	41	-	77	5	-
	Kapisa	55	4	96	14	1	14
	Logar	58	6	118	16	1	10
	Parwan	128	22	130	26	5	9
	Wardak	77	4	106	2	1	5
East	Kunar	106	13	74	22	6	21
	Laghman	59	12	48	12	14	4
	Nangarhar	138	45	100	19	3	20
South	Ghazni	158	22	138	18	4	33
	Paktia	150	12	113	4	2	0
	Paktika*	0	4	61	0	0	4
South West	Helmand	128	12	14	5	0	0
	Kandahar	136	6	12	7	6	2
	Nimroz	45	6	1	15	2	5
	Oruzgan	117	2	14	4	0	0
	Zabul	65	6	15	1	0	0
National Totals		**3,006**	**472**	**1912**	**453**	**117**	**290**

Total primary schools 1978: 3,459
Total primary schools 1990: 589 (excludes estimated 2,044 agency schools)
Total primary schools 1993: 2,202 (including agency schools, excluding Kabul schools)

* Paktika 1978 data included in Paktia

Sources: 1978 and 1990 data: UNDP, 1993 - 1993 data: UNO/ESSP, 1994

ANNEX 2 PRIMARY SCHOOL ENROLMENTS BY GENDER AND PROVINCE, 1978 - 1993

Region	**Province**	**# Male Students**			**# Female Students**		
		1978	**1990**	**1993**	**1978**	**1990**	**1993**
North East	Badakshan	29427	10955	36292	4628	5644	8585
	Baghlan	27809	12723	44053	4413	6555	6381
	Kunduz	28232	8072	22108	4570	4159	3659
	Takhar	21688	7704	33694	2707	3965	2749
North	Balkh	31170	29127	23277	7679	15007	8760
	Faryab	32479	8894	1372	9481	4582	0
	Jawzjan/ Saripul	30292	10237	6770	3906	5279	658
	Samangan	12530	5242	15134	2058	2701	2969
West	Badghis	11162	2168	845	705	1118	0
	Farah	19491	7124	15460	2118	3671	1920
	Herat	40397	28474	47577	9675	14669	16289
East Central	Bamyan	14576	2464	15349	1370	1271	1775
	Ghor	16014	2070	3714	900	1067	501
Central	Kabul	132719	219611	-	64192	113134	-
	Kapisa	19186	3540	33141	3314	1824	1169
	Logar	16512	1763	22921	2054	908	630
	Parwan	37068	8865	48182	5603	4566	4646
	Wardak	17130	546	28070	238	281	317
East	Kunar	20656	2200	13934	2945	2200	1531
	Laghman	22375	2672	19461	2722	1378	235
	Nangarhar	34335	10283	70267	3650	5297	6330
South	Ghazni	37717	3726	39294	3397	1919	3513
	Paktia*	42362	6572	43466	1147	3385	0
	Paktika	0	1535	10986	0	792	291
South West	Helmand	24285	6885	3764	1736	3549	0
	Kandahar	25223	7709	5604	4780	3973	759
	Nimroz	7748	1213	1350	1270	627	1270
	Oruzgan	20160	739	1548	243	410	0
	Zabul	7191	1219	1696	281	630	0
National Totals:		**779934**	**414386**	**609328**	**151782**	**214561**	**75971**

Total Students: 1978: 931,716
1990: 628,947 (excludes estimated 200,000 students in agency supported schools)
1993: 685,299 (includes agency schools, excludes Kabul)

* Paktika 1978 data included in Paktia
Sources: 1978 and 1990 data: UNDP, 1993. 1993 data: UNO/ESSP, 1994

ANNEX 3 PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS, BY GENDER AND PROVINCE, 1978 - 1993

Region	Province	# Male Teachers 1978	1990	1993	# Female Teachers 1978	1990	1993
North East	Badakshan	944	401	1503	41	48	295
	Baghlan	878	122	1178	105	83	278
	Kunduz	753	54	626	135	134	245
	Takhar	800	109	1265	11	16	48
North	Balkh	1045	586	474	214	395	725
	Faryab	1070	271	43	134	247	0
	Jawzjan/ Saripul	676	244	177	61	180	32
	Samangan	374	75	500	66	40	113
West	Badghis	287	46	31	8	20	0
	Farah	833	146	509	24	70	81
	Herat	1491	354	1399	295	290	604
East Central	Bamyan	491	43	538	0	2	11
	Ghor	531	20	137	0	8	7
Central	Kabul	3023	1928	-	3519	7943	-
	Kapisa	741	60	1138	46	0	23
	Logar	596	64	1058	11	2	1
	Parwan	1782	320	1682	60	8	191
	Wardak	524	41	1121	0	0	0
East	Kunar	810	145	519	12	14	11
	Laghman	752	163	662	53	6	2
	Nangarhar	1642	462	2178	65	75	142
South	Ghazni	1505	97	1378	20	16	52
	Paktia*	1353	545	1196	12	78	1
	Paktika	0	8	461	0	0	0
South West	Helmand	416	177	174	24	6	4
	Kandahar	1008	127	166	137	85	28
	Nimroz	298	40	37	0	3	40
	Oruzgan	510	63	76	9	0	0
	Zabul	305	14	88	2	5	0
National Totals:		**25438**	**6725**	**20055**	**5064**	**8874**	**2937**

Total Teachers: 1978: 30,502
1990: 15,599 (excludes teachers in agency supported schools)
1993: 22,992 (includes agency schools, excludes Kabul)

* Paktika 1978 data included in Paktia

Sources: 1978 and 1990 data: UNDP, 1993. 1993 data: UNO/ESSP, 1994

ANNEX 4 PARTICIPATION RATES BY GENDER AND PROVINCE, 1993

Region	Province	Male Students # Boys enrolm.	Part. rate	% Boys of total enrolled	Female Students Girls enrolm.	Part. rate	% Girls of total enrolled
North East	Badakshan	36292	39.3	80.1	8585	10.4	19.9
	Baghlan	44053	73.0	87.4	6381	11.9	12.6
	Kunduz	22108	27.0	82.6	3659	6.4	17.3
	Takhar	33694	37.0	92.5	2749	3.4	7.5
North	Balkh	23277	24.2	72.7	8760	10.2	27.3
	Faryab	1372	1.2	100.0	0	0.0	0.0
	Jawzjan/ Saripul	6770	6.5	91.1	658	0.7	8.9
	Samangan	15134	30.6	83.6	2969	6.7	16.4
West	Badghis	2168	3.3	100.0	0	0.0	0.0
	Farah	15460	67.6	89.0	1920	9.4	11.0
	Herat	47577	74.8	74.4	16289	28.7	25.6
East Central	Bamyan	15349	30.6	89.6	1775	4.0	10.4
	Ghor	3714	7.4	88.1	501	1.1	11.9
Central	Kabul	-			-		
	Kapisa	33141	46.2	96.5	1169	1.9	3.5
	Logar	22921	90.0	97.3	630	2.8	2.7
	Parwan	48182	58.0	91.2	4646	6.3	8.2
	Wardak	28070	44.1	98.9	317	0.6	1.1
East	Kunar	13934	27.6	90.1	1531	3.4	9.9
	Laghman	19461	34.1	98.9	235	0.5	11.1
	Nangarhar	70267	50.5	91.7	6330	5.1	8.3
South	Ghazni	39294	33.0	91.8	3513	3.3	8.2
	Paktia	43466	53.6	100.0	0	0.0	0.0
	Paktika	10986	31.2	97.4	291	0.9	2.6
South West	Helmand	6885	5.4	100.0	0	0.0	0.0
	Kandahar	5604	5.1	88.1	759	0.8	11.9
	Nimroz	1350	15.1	51.5	1270	15.9	48.5
	Oruzgan	1548	2.0	100.0	0	0.0	0.0
	Zabul	1696	6.1	100.0	0	0.0	0.0
National Totals:		**609328**	**26.8**	**88.9**	**75971**	**3.7**	**11.1**

Participation rate overall: 15.9

Source: UNO/ESSP, 1994

ANNEX 5 NUMBERS OF SCHOOLS SUPPORTED BY NGOS, BY PROVINCE, 1988/91 - 1995

Region	Province	No. of schools operated with NGO support 1988/91	1995
North East	Badakshan	174	65
	Baghlan	99	22
	Kunduz	53	52
	Takhar	42	46
North	Balkh	38	0
	Faryab	49	0
	Jawzjan/ Saripul	55	0
	Samangan	47	35
West	Badghis	4	0
	Farah	17	0
	Herat	48	0
East Central	Bamyan	48	42
	Ghor	23	0
Central	Kabul	25	5
	Kapisa	51	32
	Logar	161	55
	Parwan	87	20
	Wardak	213	91
East	Kunar	53	69
	Laghman	47	24
	Nangarhar	103	32
South	Ghazni	203	100
	Paktia	41	18
	Paktika	57	39
South West	Helmand	32	0
	Kandahar	34	47
	Nimroz	2	0
	Oruzgan	14	48
	Zabul	24	22
Total:		1,844	864

Note: Schools listed receive minimally basic school and students supplies and teacher salary support. Excluded are schools not receiving teacher salaries.

Source: 1988/91 data: UNICEF, 1992
1995 data: ACBAR/SCA, 1995

ANNEX 6 SITUATION OF EDUCATION IN THE PROVINCES, 1995

This annex groups regions into broad categories of situations reflecting the status of education in the country in 1995, based on statistical data on schools, enrolments, teachers, and agency support (annexes 1-5), additional available information and anecdotal evidence. Three situations are distinguished: near collapse, minimally functioning, and functioning.

Situation 1 - Near collapse

The most serious decline in access to education has occurred in the five **south-western provinces** and four **adjoining provinces to the north**. These are predominantly rural, conservative, and in some cases remote provinces with traditionally tenuous links to the center. Of 902 boys' schools and 97 girls' schools in 1978 in these provinces combined, only 107 schools for boys and 7 girls' schools were reportedly in existence in 1993. The south-western provinces were also particularly affected by the closure of a major education programme in 1994, and more recently by isolation from the centre. This creates a north-south corridor in which education provision is in a state of near collapse. A few isolated boys' schools exist, some with NGO support, while girls' education has come to a complete or near complete halt.

Situation 2 - Minimally functioning

Primary education provision in Ghazni and the **central provinces** surrounding Kabul was probably approaching or superseding 1978 levels in terms of school numbers and boys' enrolments in 1993. In Kunar and Laghman this return to pre-war levels was not yet achieved. The **southern** provinces (Paktia, Paktika) also seem to be within reach of pre-war levels. However, girls' enrolments have declined in all these provinces except Ghazni, an indication of the conflicts around women's roles and status in Pakhtun areas. Agency support for salary costs has decreased.

Two **northern** provinces (Balkh, Samangan) had traditionally high enrolments for boys and girls. However, these provinces have not yet recovered from the decline that occurred since 1978. In these provinces, there has been virtually no agency support for rural schools, and education is mainly confined to the towns. Currently, there are virtually no books in the schools. Isolation from the centre since 1994 could bring education in this area on the verge of collapse. Schools in the fast growing capital of Balkh province, Mazar-i-Sharif, have had to cope with increasing student numbers.

Support for education, including female education was traditionally higher in the Tajik **north-eastern provinces**, and this is reflected in past and current enrolment patterns. Numbers of schools and enrolments for boys and girls in 1993 surpass 1978 levels. External support for rural schools in these provinces has remained substantial. Government schools suffer from lack of books and supplies.

Prior to 1990, the capital **Kabul** experienced a large population increase, as rural people migrated to the safety and economic opportunities of the city. Enrolments in Kabul schools increased accordingly. For example, UNICEF (1992) quotes total primary enrolments for Kabul as 109,607 in 1978 and 336,551 in 1991. Schools remained closed during the factional fighting for control of the capital between 1992 and early 1995. Schools and other public buildings were used to house displaced families. Agencies support schools in camps established for the thousands of Kabul displaced in the south near Jalalabad. Now people are returning to the capital. School buildings have been vacated and lessons resumed, often amidst the rubble of destroyed school buildings, without textbooks or supplies. The Ministry quotes initial enrolment figures of 244,000 in 162 schools in 1995.

Situation 3 - Functioning

Herat, to the **west** of this corridor has an urban, Persian influenced culture, where education has always been highly valued. Following a decline in overall enrolments between 1978 and 1990, steady growth has occurred. Enrolments in 1993 surpassed 1978 levels, and participation rates in 1993 were among the highest in the

country; 74.8 percent for boys and 28.7 percent for girls. For 1995 initial provincial figures indicate a further 40 percent increase in primary boys' enrolments over 1993. Girls' enrolments tripled between 1978 and 1995. The fast recent growth is mostly due to the repatriation of Afghan refugees from Iran. The provincial education department is strong and active. Education in Herat, at least in the city, is functioning.

(see also map "Status of Education in Afghanistan, 1995" on page vi)

ANNEX 7 AGENCY INPUTS TO EDUCATION IN AFGHANISTAN, (PLANNED) 1995

This annex provides a brief summary of support to education of UN and International and Afghan non-governmental agencies in 1995. It should be noted that education assistance is for many agencies only a small component of their programmes. Many agencies provide assistance to schools in the context of rural rehabilitation programmes. Other agencies have substantial independent education programmes, as well as progammes in other sectors. No attempt has been made in this summary to distinguish between these agencies. Agencies specialized in education services only are marked with a star.

AAID (Afghan Agency for Integrated Development) provides comprehensive support to 4 schools in Nuristan;

ACBAR (Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief) is the coordinating body for rehabilitation and development efforts of non-governmental organizations for Afghanistan. Agencies involved in education coordinate efforts through the ACBAR Education-Sub Committee.

ARIC (ACBAR Resource and Information Centre) contains resource material on Afghanistan, including education documents and materials.

ADA (Afghan Development Administration) provides comprehensive support to 122 primary schools in southwestern Afghanistan.

AFRANE (Amitie Franco Afghane Aide Humanitaire er Info) provides comprehensive support to 4 schools in Logar province.

* **AG BAS-ED** is the NGO off-shoot of GTZ/BEFARe (see there). AG BAS-ED provides comprehensive support to 2 schools for displaced in camps near Jalalabad and 2 local schools, including tents for camp schools. The agency also organizes adult literacy programmes and MCH programmes for women, and plans to extend its activities to five additional provinces.

AITM (Afghan Inkishafee Tarbiawee Markaz) conducts training programmes for other NGOs. AITM plans to work with the Herat Pedagogy Institute and SCF/UK to organize mobile teacher training teams for Herat province.

* **AMNA** (Creation d'Ecoles Pilotes en Afghanistan) supports 6 highschools in Kabul and Nangarhar.

BBC/AED (BBC/Afghan Education Drama) project broadcast an educational radio drama "New Home, New Life" in Dari and Pashto. The project also develops monthly cartoon journals based on the soap opera to be used as adult reading material. BBC/AED are exploring production of a separate issue of the magazine for use in primary schools.

CARE International is piloting a home school project in the Khost area, emphasizing girls' participation and community management. CARE provides education inputs and teacher training. Up to 40 schools will be established depending on community interest.

CHA (Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance) supports 2 schools in Farah, including salary subsidies for teachers. The organization plans to integrate literacy training into their carpet weaving programmes in Herat.

CoAR (Coordination of Afghan Relief) supports 7 schools in Wardak and Ghazni with textbooks, school and student supplies, salary subsidies and construction/repair.

DHSA (Development and Humanitarian Services in Afghanistan) plans to construct an extension to a secondary school in Ghazni.

* **EPA** (Education Project for Afghanistan) has come out of the former UNO/ESSP project, and in 1995 revised the UNO textbooks to replace references to war and violence with messages of peace and unity. The Ministry has designated EPA as the official body in charge of textbook development and publication.

* **GTZ/BEFARe** is a bilateral and primarily technical project which develops primary instructional materials, literacy and non-formal education materials, and conducts teacher training and MCH programmes for Afghan refugees in Pashto. A Dari section is starting in 1995. The NGO AG BAS-ED is liaised with BEFARe.

IIRO (International Islamic Relief Organization) supports grades 1-3 in one of the camps for displaced in Nangarhar. IIRO support to orphaned boys includes education, and the agency plans to assist in the rehabilitation of the Jalalabad Pedagogy Institute.

IRC (International Rescue Committee) supports primary and secondary schools in four provinces with teacher training, textbooks, school and student supplies. IRC has a silk screen printing facility, as well as printing presses in Peshawar and Jalalabad.

ISRA (Islamic Relief Agency) supports 6 primary schools and one secondary school with textbooks, supplies and salary subsidies. ISRA also supports a hostel for 200 students in Kunar, and a vocational school in Jalalabad.

NAC (Norwegian Afghanistan Committee) rehabilitates education infrastructure in Ghazni, Paktia, Nangarhar, Kunar/Nuristan and Badakshan. In Ghazni province NAC supports primary and secondary schools.

NCA/NRC (Norwegian Church Aid/Norwegian Refugee Council) is a donor agency which has funded others to organize various educational activities in one of the camps for the displaced from Kabul. The agency is developing a children's magazine around peace themes, as follow up to a peace seminar in 1994.

NPO/RRAA (Norwegian Project Office/Rural Rehabilitation Office for Afghanistan) is the major implementor of educational assistance (kindergartens and primary schools) to 15,000 children in one of the camps for displaced. Support also includes community based work with children affected by war-trauma. NPO/RRAA is also involved in school construction/repair work.

PSD (Partners in Social Development) supports 8 primary and middle schools in Hazarajat (Ghazni province), with textbooks, supplies, salary subsidies and teacher training. In four northern provinces they are involved in school construction/repair. PSD publishes a monthly newsletter including a small magazine printed for children, to make more reading material available.

RBTU (Radda Barnen Training Unit) has experience training social animators and others for Afghan refugee programmes in community mobilization, self-help activities, and awareness raising about children's rights. In Afghanistan, they have trained other agencies in techniques for community based rehabilition of war-affected children and disabled.

SCA (Swedish Committee for Afghanistan) works in 16 provinces in northern and eastern Afghanistan. SCA supports 642 schools with a comprehensive package of teacher training, salary subsidies, school monitoring, textbooks, and other school supplies. SCA operates three regional teacher training centres, and conducts an adult women's training programme which includes a literacy component. SCA also provides textbooks and school supplies to 15,000 students in government schools.

SCF-UK (The Save the Children Fund/UK) is constructing ten schools in the districts of Herat. A second phase, in conjunction with AITM will be teacher training for rural teachers.

Shuhada supports 16 schools in the Hazarajat (Ghazni), and plans construction of 5 school buildings in 1995. The organization also organizes literacy training for adult women.

2 EDUCATION SUB-SECTOR REVIEW

This chapter provides the findings of the review of the education sub-sector in Afghanistan. First, it outlines the educational policy and goals for Afghanistan and the structure of the education system, in order to provide the framework within which to view developments in education. Subsequently, major changes in access to education at the national level are assessed, followed by sections dealing more specifically with access and equity concerns. Later sections review the available data on efficiency and effectiveness.

Next, the report identifies the main providers of education in Afghanistan,in which the education programmes and management patterns are summarized. Subsequently, a variety of educational inputs are reviewed, including internal and external financing, school facilities, equipment and supplies, and textbooks. Changes in the teacher corps are assessed. Also teacher training programmes and capacity, curriculum development and educational assessment are included in this section. The chapter ends with a review of special education programmes, including Early Childhood Care and Development programmes, programmes for Afghan children in special circumstances, and adult literacy programmes.

2.1 EDUCATION POLICIES AND GOALS

The latest official education policy was developed by the previous government to give new impetus to the education sector after the World Conference of Education for All. A 1991 Ministry of Education document outlines policy objectives and plans until the year 2000. The main objectives are:

- Equality of access for all citizens;
- Centralized and unified education system;
- Primary education in the mother tongue;
- Free, universal and compulsory primary education;
- Education in the light of religious Islamic principles;
- Eradication of illiteracy of all adults up to age 55.

The Government's plan calls for universalisation of primary education by the year 2000, ensuring universal access for primary graduates to middle level, reduction of the drop-out rate to zero, expansion of pre-school education, doubling teacher training capacity, mobile schools for nomads, and a large scale literacy campaign. Plans also include the establishment of a National Agency to oversee the implementation of the EFA National Plan of Action, with similar bodies at provincial and district levels.

These goals were overambitious. A 1992 progress report on Education for All, endorsed by the new Islamic Government, reveals that little headway was made during the period March 1990 to March 1992 (MOE, 1992). A new element of policy introduced in 1992 was the incorporation of the mostly rural schools, previously run by the political parties constituting the new Government, under the umbrella of the Ministry of Education.

The present Education Minister seeks to revive this policy, and adapt it to reflect current needs and priorities. He also intends on establishing councils at different levels, composed of a variety actors in education including NGOs. The councils will contribute to determining policy and coordinating efforts.

* **SOS/PG*Belgium** (Solidaritc Afghanistan SOS/PG*Belgium) is specialized in teacher training. The organization trains Afghan teachers in refugee schools, and in Afghanistan organizes teacher training courses in Jalalabad, Kunar and Laghman. Training of teachers in southwestern provinces is planned in collaboration with ADA, as well as literacy training to apprentices in vocational programmes.

UNESCO, emphasizing an enhanced vision of basic education, is focusing on the coordination of educational activities through GREAT (Grassroots Reconstruction of Education in Afghanistan). UNESCO funds various basic education activities under this endeavour.

UNHCR supports education of Afghan refugee children in Pakistan, and provides material support to school for displaced in camps near Jalalabad.

UNICEF provides school, teacher and student materials in so-called 'Edukits' in most provinces and Kabul city, through provincial education departments and some NGOs. The **Facts for Life** book (the revised 1993 edition has recently been translated into Dari and Pashto) is included in the kits, and UNICEF organizes workshops to train trainers and teachers how to use the materials for preparing teaching aids. 'Edukit' support aims at mobilizing schools for health education through the use of Facts for Life. UNICEF also pilots the home school approach with CARE as a sustainable, community-based model for increasing girls' access to basic education.. Child-to-Child methodologies and learning materials are tested in another pilot project implemented with the provincial authorities in Hera to mobilize primary schools for health and sanitation education.

Source: Summarized from 1995 Workplan for Educational Rehabilitation of Afghanistan, SCA, 1995

ANNEX 8 PRIMARY SCHOOL SYLLABUS

SUBJECT	GRADE 1	2	3	4	5	6
	Number of school periods per week					
Holy Koran	4	4	4	3	3	3
Religious Education	3	3	3	3	3	3
Arabic				2	2	2
Mother tongue	9	9	9	7	7	7
2nd language				3	3	3
Calligraphy	1	1	1	1	1	1
Math	5	5	5	5	5	5
Science and health				2	2	2
Art and practical work	1	1	1	1	1	1
Physical education	1	1	1	1	1	1
Total	24	24	24	30	30	30

ANNEX 9: SELECTED FIELD OBSERVATIONS

The following are field observations gathered as a result of field trips made to Herat and Mazar-i-Sharif, to illustrate the conditions of education in the two places. Descriptions of education management, government teacher training institutes and preschools are presented. It should be noted that both Herat and Mazar-i-Sharif have long standing traditions of demand for in education, good schools, high participation rates, and a strong educational administration. These examples should not be generalized to other parts of Afghanistan, and often will in fact present a best-case scenario.

A. MANAGEMENT OF EDUCATION

1. Balkh Province

In Mazar-i-Sharif, disruption of salary payments since 1994 has led to a situation where some committed core staff, including the President of Education attend the office for a few hours in the morning. Many others stopped working. Budget was irregular already before 1994; in 1992 the department received 75 percent of salaries, which dropped to 50% in 1993. The Department still takes responsibility for routine administrative matters, collecting annual enrolment figures, organizing annual exams and preparing promotion lists. A constant stream of visitors attends the Deputy Director for Administration's office for signatures on matters like transfers of students from one school to another. The Department reports some parental initiatives, for example for school repairs, but makes no efforts to mobilize and promote community involvement. In general the Department, overwhelmed by the lack of funding, is waiting for directions and funding from a future central government. Positive activities were the observation of the International Literacy Day and the organization of a Teachers' Day, for which funds were raised from the local business community. It is admirable how this small group of educational administrators continues under adverse circumstances to keep education "alive".

2. Herat Province

The Education Department in Herat is buzzing with activity. Headed by an able educational administrator, the department is actively responding to needs created by fast increasing enrolments as Afghans repatriate from Iran. The Department has had to hire unqualified teachers to cope with this increase, and major concerns for the Director are teacher quality and the dwindling numbers of textbooks in the schools. Destruction of physical infrastructure was particularly bad in Herat, but because of relative security, many agencies now work in the province and construct school buildings. The Department also plans for the future. The President submitted a request to the Ministry in Kabul for more department staff, a school health unit, and a new directorate for religious schools. Parents committees were established in many schools last year. Of course the Department is constrained by the lack of funding, and only manages to pay salaries but not much more.

B. TEACHER TRAINING COLLEGES

1. Pedagogy Institute Rodaki, Mazar-i-Sharif

Since 9 years the institute, named after an Afghan poet, is a regional Higher Teacher Training College to prepare secondary teachers for Balkh, Jawzjan and Faryab provinces. Currently, only five students from other provinces, who have relatives in Mazar-i-Sharif study in the institute. The institute cannot accommodate students from outside the city. The hostel is occupied, and there is no money for stipends. It is difficult to attract students. With a capacity of 1,000 students, the Institute claims an enrolment of 650. Registration dates are announced over the radio, but there are no pre-service primary classes, and only few primary teachers joined the five year primary in-service upgrading programme. Only 60, of which half are women, are enrolled. The University of Balkh sets the quota for the secondary programs, but students passing the university entrance test prefer other faculties. There is money nor status in teaching, is the unanimous explanation offered. Some staff have left since salary payments stopped. The President and the instructors fear that the institute will close by the year 2000, if there is no change.

2. Pedagogy Institute Herat

The Institute in Herat has been a regional Higher Teacher Training College since 1986. Some of its classroom blocks and the hostel are used by the University. However, the institute still has many well-kept classrooms and office space, including a biology classroom, a chemistry laboratory and a library (donated by UNESCO before the war), perhaps the best library in Herat. Attached to the Institute is a large laboratory school, which uses some of the classrooms and space outside.

The Institute experienced a drop in enrolments after 1978, when large numbers of Heratis fled to Iran, and conscription into the army kept male students away. Now the numbers are picking up again, and there are 400 students enrolled. But also in Herat interest in the teaching profession has declined. There are 50 students in the pre-service primary programme, and 40 attend the in-service afternoon classes. The majority of these students are women. Since the Islamic government was established in 1992, male and female students study in separate classes. The Institute has no teaching materials, but the instructors prepare lecture notes. The President is anxious to build the Institute up again.

C. PRE-SCHOOL PROGRAMMES

1. Mazar-i-Sharif

In Balkh province there are 39 pre-schools, employing 228 female staff and serving 640 children. Over half of these are attached to educational institutions for children of female teachers, 15 are attached to government offices and other places of work. Three are community based institutions, open to all children. The Department of Social Welfare, headed by an active woman and assisted by an equally capable General Director for pre-schools is trying to keep the pre-schools open, but they face many constraints. In the previous years, buildings were looted, the Department lost half of the staff, staff salaries were paid erraticallyand stopped completely after 1994. Four pre-schools had to close, and numbers declined dramatically. The Teacher Training Institute prepares 12th grade graduates to work as pre-school teachers, but due to lack of interest the course is no longer offered. UNICEF has provided kitchen utensils, plates and cups, and WFP food, so school meals could be resumed.

The pre-schools are virtually bare, except some furniture items, and sometimes a few cots or mattresses for the youngest children. There is little structured activity for the children aged 3 and 4. The children are taught manners, some songs and games. Most activity concentrates on the 5/6 year olds, who are prepared for primary school through beginning math and language development activities.

2. Herat

Two of the five pre-schools in Herat are neighborhood pre-schools. The Social Welfare Department has submitted a request to the Social Welfare Ministry in Kabul to expand to at least two other neighborhoods. In Herat the number of children has increased over the last few years, and now exceeds one thousand. The pre-schools serve an important function for parents in the city, and there is high demand. Also in Herat, UNICEF has provided kitchen utensils and WFP provides food for a daily school meal. UNICEF also provides some stationery for the 6 year olds. Though basic, the Kodakistans in Herat are better off in terms of materials and equipment than those in Mazar. In Herat all classes for young children have some toys, there are mats to sit on, blackboards, school furniture for the six year olds, mattresses for the very young ones, and cots for babies and toddlers. There were some teacher-made materials in evidence, for example to teach colors.

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2.2 EDUCATION STRUCTURE

2.2.1 Formal education

In 1990, an education structure consisting of six years of primary education, three years of middle school and three years of higher secondary education (lycee) was reintroduced in Afghanistan. This 6+3+3 structure had been in place before 1975. The new education ladder replaced a ten-year structure (4+4+2), which in turn was preceded by an 8+4 system. The 6+3+3 structure is accepted and adhered to throughout Afghanistan.

The official entry age for primary school is 7 years. This is late by international standards. In most countries children start school at age six. Students have to pass a final exam at the end of each academic year in order to be promoted to the next level. Provincial departments are responsible for writing the exam papers. In theory, the exam results of students in the final grade are recorded and kept in the provincial education office. Schools also organise internal semester exams.

2.2.2 Early Childhood programmes

The government organises so called "Kodakistan" programmes in some of the major urban centres. These are institution based programmes usually attached to places of work, such as schools, government offices and factories. They offer day-care, pre-school and kindergarten for young children (aged 3 months to 7 years) of working mothers. Administratively they are placed under the Provincial Departments of Social Welfare.

2.2.3 Adult Literacy

The following types of programmes were developed in the early 1990s:

- Adult literacy programmes targeting different groups; urban population, women (rural and urban), farmers, armed forces, providing equivalency to grade 3 of primary school;
- Complementary programme for the graduates of the above mentioned courses, offering grade 4-9 in a two year programme;
- Out-of-school children programmes for 9 to 14 year olds, leading to grade 4 in 2 years. Graduates can in principle continue in complementary vocational cum educational courses, leading to a grade 9 certificate;
- Workers' complementary education programme aimed at graduates of literacy courses working in factories, offering grades 4-8;
- Evening classes aimed at graduates of literacy courses and school dropouts who are working during the day, offering grade 4-9.

These programmes have their origins in adult literacy programmes developed before 1978. Their most important aim is to permit lateral entry into the formal system. A General President for Literacy Affairs, reporting to the Minister of Education, is responsible for non-formal adult education.

2.3 ACCESS TO EDUCATION

What changes in access to primary education can be discerned for Afghanistan? Access to education was always limited to a small proportion of the population. Global changes in access to education over time have mostly not occurred as a result of planning, but as a consequence of other factors as they impacted on education in regions, provinces or smaller geographical areas. Examples of such factors are security, population movements, linkage with the Kabul government, patterns of agency support, and attitudes toward education of communities or local powers.

2.3.1 Demand

Traditionally, a majority of Afghan parents were largely indifferent towards formal education. Demand for girls' education was particularly low for reasons commonly found in rural Muslim societies. These reasons include traditional values limiting girls' mobility and perceived irrelevance of formal schooling as preparation for adult roles. Interest was high among urban populations. Education for girls was less valued among ethnic Pakhtun[1] groups.

Enforcement of social programmes for women by the Government after 1978 made education a political and divisive issue. Many illiterate Afghans came to view all formal education as a threat to traditional values. Many families refused to send children to government schools. In the course of time, Afghan *mujahideen* commanders realised the importance of education in preserving Afghan identity. Schools were set up in areas under their control. Boys' participation reached unprecedented levels in the refugee schools in Pakistan. Girls' education was anathema at first, but this changed gradually.

Demand for education has increased. The experience of exile has widened the horizons of many Afghans and they value education more than in the past. Returning refugees want education services in their villages. There are numerous instances of refugees remaining in Pakistan for their children's education. NGOs receive countless requests for assistance to set up schools. Returnees from Iran expect the same level of quality their children enjoyed in Iranian schools. Many Afghans view this heightened value placed on education as one of the very few positive effects exile has had.

Presently, there is a broad-based demand for primary education for boys. Demand for girls' education has also increased, however, it is still resisted or considered unimportant in many communities. Girls' participation also remains politically sensitive. For example, one conservative faction has recently closed girls' schools in some of the areas they control. Demand for both boys' and girls' education currently outstrips the capacity of the government and voluntary agencies to provide educational facilities.

2.3.2 Enrolments

Describing current access to basic primary education and assessing trends over the past few years is difficult because of the lack of reliable national data on education. The latest information prepared by the Government dates back to 1991. The most recent comprehensive data are from a nation-wide education survey conducted by the University of Nebraska at Omaha/Education Sector Support Project (UNO/ESSP) in 1993[2]. Findings of education surveys carried out in 1995 by two NGOs in a total of 21 provinces are not yet available. The indicators of access to primary education presented in table 1 have to be interpreted with great caution. Statistics were compiled differently, and different sources quote varying figures for the same time period. Numbers should be treated as estimates that will, at best, help to identify changes.

[1] One of the major ethnic groups in Afghanistan.

[2] The University of Nebraska at Omaha/Education Sector Support Project was a multi-million dollar education project for Afghanistan funded by USAID. The project was initiated in 1986 and concluded in 1994, as a result of the decision of USAID to phase out their Afghanistan Mission.

TABLE 1 INDICATORS OF ACCESS TO PRIMARY EDUCATION, 1978 - 1993

	Number of schools		Primary enrolments		Participation rates
	Male	Female	Male	Female	
1978 - Ministry of Education	2,948	404	842,908	152,745	30%
1990 - Ministry of Education	472[1]	114	414,386	214,561	-
1988/90 - Rural schools/ cross border	1,844		200,000	-	-
1993 - UNO/ESSP[2]	1,912	290	609,328	75,971	16%

[1] This may present an understatement of primary units, excluding the numbers of middle schools and lycees which also contain primary sections.
[2] UNO/ESSP data include cross-border schools, and exclude Kabul schools (closed during 1993)

Sources: UNICEF 1992, Carter 1988, UNO/ESSP 1994, UNDP 1993

No firm conclusions can be drawn. An indication of a decline in access between 1978 and 1990 is the reduction in the total numbers of government schools and students. If one adds the schools supported cross-border, with enrolments of about 200,000 students, the national picture in 1990 is less bleak than government data suggest. In addition, sizeable numbers of Afghan children were educated in Pakistan and Iran in 1990. Data for 1993 suggest a further decline, but are skewed because Kabul schools were closed (annex 1 and 2 provide data on schools and enrolments by province for the various years). In 1995, Kabul schools reopened. The number of schools supported with external aid decreased to 864 in 1995, down from more than 1,800 in 1990. Student numbers, with fluctuations over time, in 1995 are perhaps roughly back at pre-war 1978 levels.

2.3.3 Participation Rates

All sources indicate a decline in overall participation rates. In 1978 the primary school participation rate for the country was estimated to be about 30 percent (37.8 percent for boys and 8.4 percent for girls) (UNICEF, 1992). Ten years later , about 19 percent of the total eligible primary age group was still enrolled in primary schools. Of these, 24 percent of eligible boys were enrolled, and 13 percent of eligible girls were enrolled in 1988 (up from 8.4 percent in 1978) (UNDP, 1993). Data for 1993 show a further decline to 15.9 percent (UNO/ESSP, 1993), but this excludes Kabul. Only 3.7 percent of the girls of school age were in school, and 26.8 percent of boys.[3]

Afghanistan has a fast growing population. Demographic projections used by UNICEF estimate a population growth of approximately 4 million between 1990 and 1993, and an additional 6 million by the year 2000, which would bring the total population, estimated at 20.1 million in 1993, to 26.7 million (UNICEF, 1995). Thus, sizeable numbers of children are added to the primary education age group each year by population growth alone.

2.4 ACCESS AND EQUITY

There are major disparities in access to education across groups in Afghanistan. Access patterns are similar to those of many other developing countries, with major imbalances between genders, urban and rural locations, and regions.

[3] It is not clear whether participation rates are based on gross or net enrolment ratios.

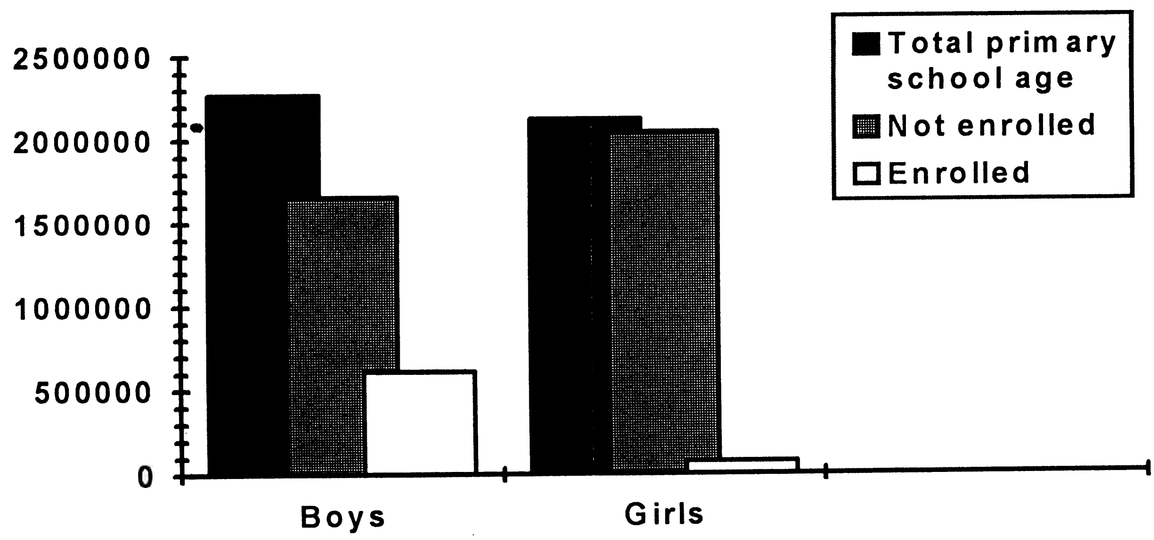
2.4.1 Gender

Afghanistan has very low girls' participation rates. Regional gender disparities are significant. The map on page 8 reflects girls' participation rates as estimated for 1993. The overall rate is 3.7 percent. Only four provinces show girls' participation rates above 10 percent, and in 12 out of 29 provinces the rates are below one percent. Evidence suggests that girls education in the whole country, where it exists, remains mostly confined to urban centres. UNO/ESSP data report 59 percent of girls' enrolments to be urban (excluding Kabul).

It is difficult to surmise changes over time. The available statistical data suggest an increase in girls' enrolments in government schools between 1978 and 1990. Data for 1993 suggest a sharp decline. This can be partially explained by the exclusion of enrolments for Kabul. Girls' education in some urban centres came under pressure with the installation of the new government in 1992. Recently, some girls' schools were closed in provinces that were taken over by a conservative political faction. Overall, girls remain largely excluded from education. This is illustrated in Table 2.

Male/female enrolment disparities are equally discouraging. In 1993, the difference between girls' and boys' participation rates was 23.1 percentage points. Within the country, provinces that show relatively high enrolments for boys, do not necessarily have correspondingly high rates for girls. For example, boys' rates in Wardak province are 44 percent and girls' rates less than one percent in 1993 (see annex 4 for detailed data by province).

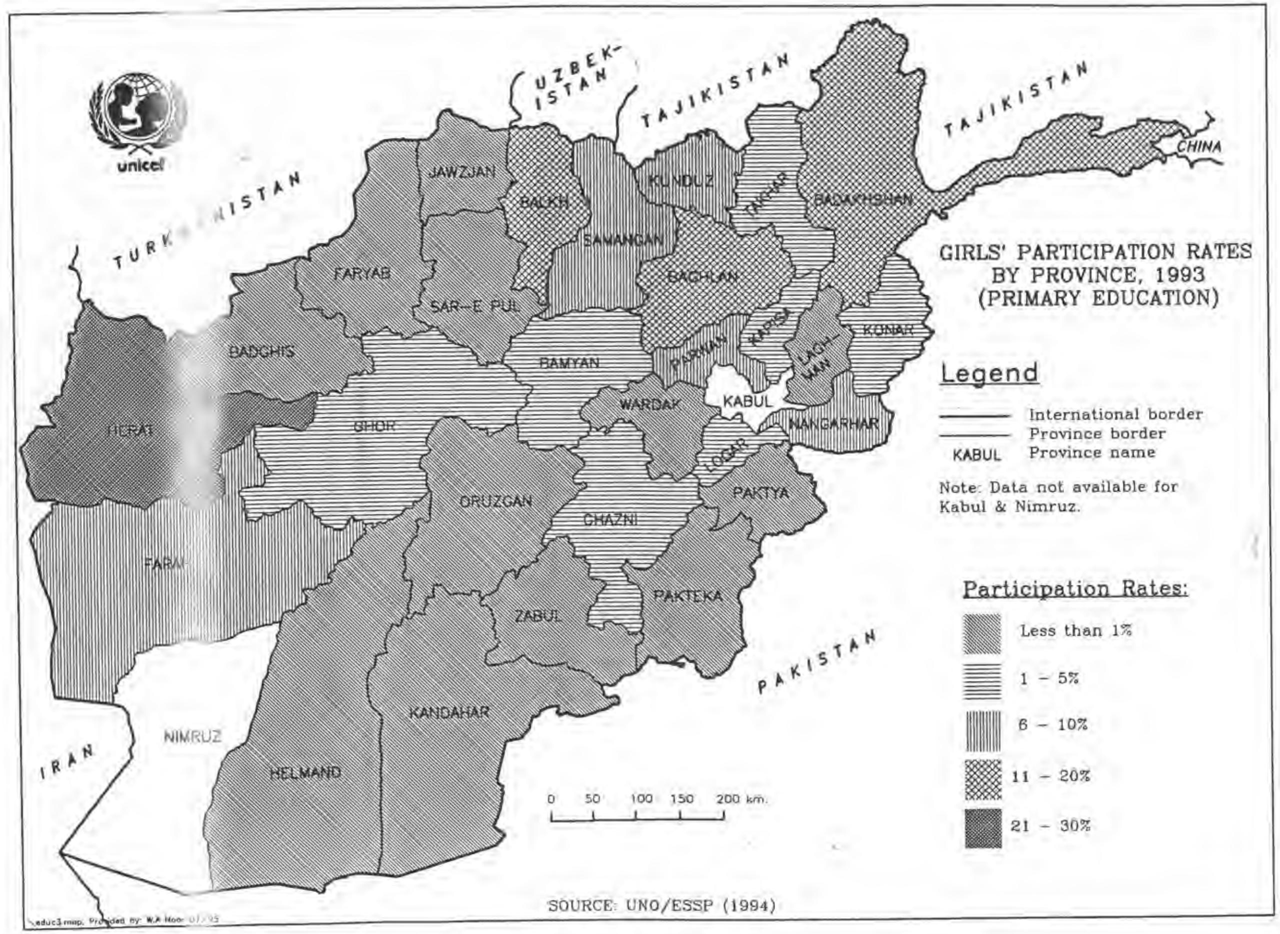
TABLE 2 PARTICIPATION RATES BY GENDER, 1993



Source: UNO/ESSP, 1994

2.4.2 Urban-rural disparities

The urbanised population in 1992 was estimated at 19 percent (UNICEF, 1995). Educational opportunities are concentrated in urban areas. In 1991 government data note 745 urban and 607 rural primary schools. In 1992 education in the main cities suffered a setback when turmoil, resulting from the change of government, disrupted urban services. However, urban administrations manage to keep education going or revive it fairly quickly. For example, schools in Kabul re-opened efficiently after three years. Schools in Mazar-i-Sharif continue to function despite the fact that teachers do not receive salaries.


GIRLS' PARTICIPATION RATES
BY PROVINCE, 1993
(PRIMARY EDUCATION)
Legend
International border
Province border
KABUL Province name
Note: Data not available for Kabul & Nimruz.
Participation Rates:
Less than 1%
1 - 5%
6 - 10%
11 - 20%
21 - 30%
unicef
UZBEKISTAN
TAJIKISTAN
TAJIKISTAN
CHINA
PAKISTAN
IRAN
JAWZJAN
BALKH
SAMANGAN
KUNDUZ
TAKHAR
BADAKHSHAN
FARYAB
SAR-E PUL
BAGHLAN
BADGHIS
PARWAN
KAPISA
KONAR
LAGHMAN
BAMYAN
KABUL
WARDAK
NANGARHAR
HERAT
GHOR
LOGAR
PAKTYA
ORUZGAN
GHAZNI
FARAH
ZABUL
PAKTEKA
KANDAHAR
NIMRUZ
HELMAND
0 50 100 150 200 km.
SOURCE: UNO/ESSP (1994)

2.4.3 Regional disparities

Educational opportunities are unevenly distributed between regions. Disparate developments in different areas, coupled with the dire paucity of information generally, make it impossible to map precise developments for every region. In annex 6, regions are grouped into broad categories of situations reflecting the status of education in the country in 1995 (also see map on page vi). In the majority of provinces education is minimally functioning. In a substantial number of other provinces education is near collapse. Education is functioning at a reasonable level only in Herat province.

Regions vary widely in participation rates for boys and girls. No figures are available for 1995, but the 1993 figures provide a proxy for the present situation. The maps on pages 8 and 10 show provincial participation rates by gender for 1993. On the basis of this information, a priority listing of provinces requiring attention can be outlined in order of need:

For girls:

Rates below 1%	- Helmand, Kandahar, Zabul, Oruzgan, Paktia, Paktika, Wardak, Laghman, Badgis, Faryab, Jawzjan, Sar-e-Pul;
2 - 5%	- Ghor, Bamyan, Ghazni, Logar, Kunar, Takhar, Kapisa
6 - 10%	- Samangan, Kunduz, Parwan, Farah, Nangarhar
11 - 20%	- Baghlan, Balkh and Badakshan
21 - 30%	- Herat

Note: for Nimruz and Kabul no information is available. In Kabul province, girls' participation rates are likely to be high, in Nimruz low.

For boys:

Rates between 1 and 10%	- Helmand, Kandahar, Zabul, Oruzgan, Ghor, Badghis, Faryab, Sar-e-Pul, Jawzjan
11 - 20%	- Nimruz
21 - 30%	- Balkh, Kunduz, Kunar
31 - 50%	- Badakshan, Takhar, Samangan, Bamyan, Kapisa, Laghman, Nangarhar, Wardak, Ghazni, Paktika
51 - 75%	- Paktia, Parwan, Baghlan, Farah, Herat
76 - 90%	- Logar

Note: Participation rates for Kabul province are likely to be high (in 1995).

The capacity of government to diminish regional inequities is obviously constrained by the political fragmentation of the country. Other factors are resource constraints, capacity of provincial departments, remoteness, teacher supply and demand patterns.

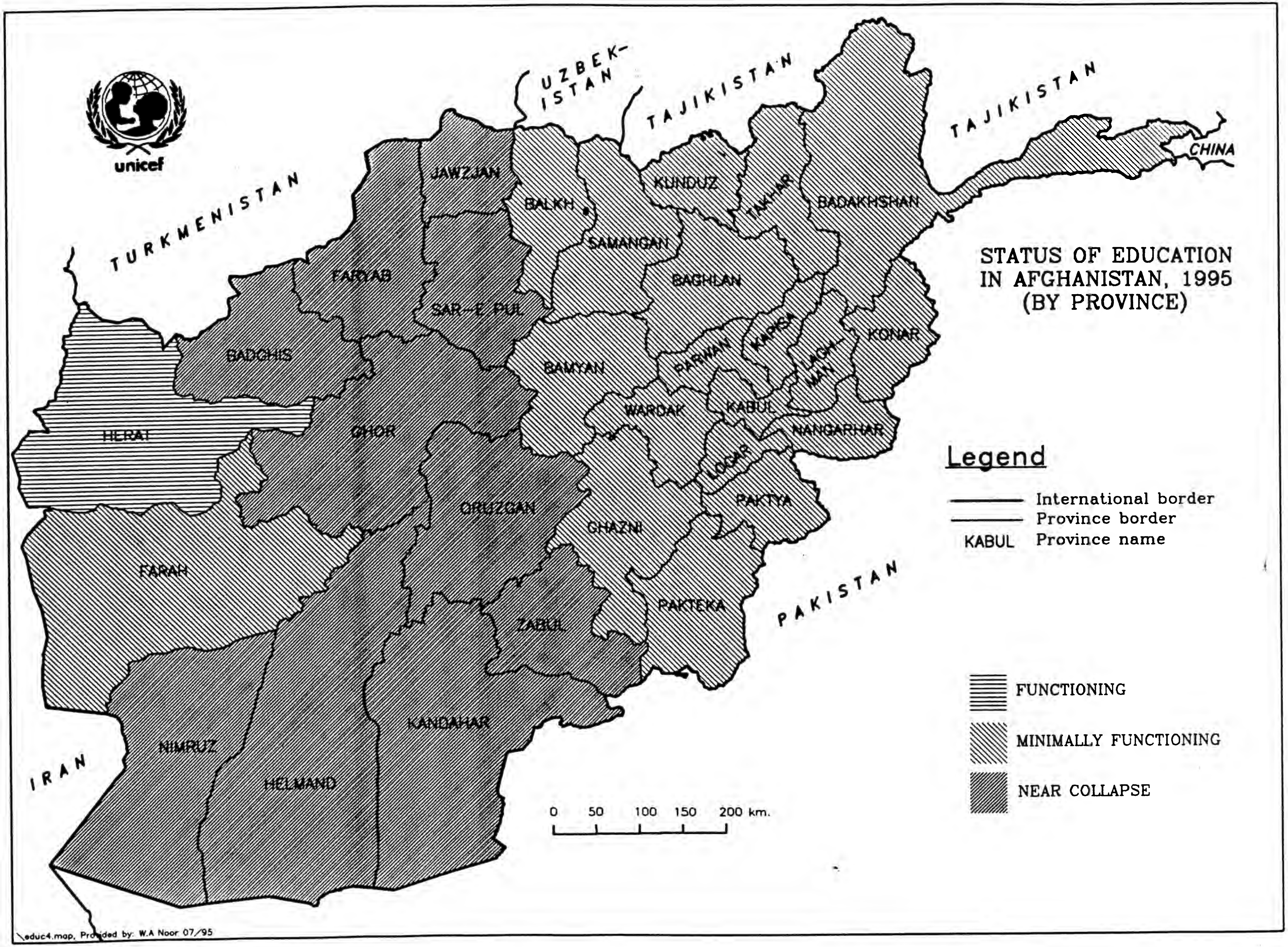

STATUS OF EDUCATION
IN AFGHANISTAN, 1995
(BY PROVINCE)
Legend
International border
Province border
KABUL Province name
FUNCTIONING
MINIMALLY FUNCTIONING
NEAR COLLAPSE
0 50 100 150 200 km.
UZBEK-ISTAN
TAJIKISTAN
TAJIKISTAN
CHINA
TURKMENISTAN
PAKISTAN
IRAN
unicef
JAWZJAN
BALKH
KUNDUZ
TAKHAR
BADAKHSHAN
SAMANGAN
FARYAB
SAR-E PUL
BAGHLAN
BADGHIS
BAMYAN
PARWAN
KAPISA
LAGHMAN
KONAR
HERAT
GHOR
WARDAK
KABUL
NANGARHAR
LOGAR
PAKTYA
ORUZGAN
GHAZNI
FARAH
PAKTEKA
ZABUL
KANDAHAR
NIMRUZ
HELMAND
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

page

List of tables

List of insets

List of maps

ABBREVIATIONS

ACBAR	Agency Co-ordinating Body for Afghan Relief
ADA	Afghan Development Association
AG BAS-Ed	Afghan German Basic Education
ARIC	ACBAR Resource and Information Centre
BBC-AED	British Broadcasting Corporation - Afghan Education Drama
DACAAR	Danish Committee for Aid to Afghan Refugees
ECA	Education Council for Afghanistan
EFA	Education for All
EPA	Education Project for Afghanistan
GTZ-BEFARe	Gesellschaft for Technische Zusammenarbeit - Basic Education for Refugees
IRC	International Rescue Committee
MCH	Mother and Child Health
MOE	Ministry of Education
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PSD	Partners in Social Development
SCA	Swedish Committee for Afghanistan
SCF-UK	Save the Children Fund, UK.
SOS/PG*Belgium	Solidarité Afghanistan SOS/PG*Belgium
TTI	Teacher Training Institute
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNOCHA	United Nations Organizations for Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance to Afghanistan
UNO/ESSP	University of Nebraska at Omaha/Education Sector Support Project
UNDP/OPS	United Nations Development Programme/Office for Project Services
WCEFA	World Conference on Education for All
WHO	World Health Organization

MID-DECADE REVIEW OF PROGRESS TOWARD EDUCATION FOR ALL IN AFGHANISTAN



REPORT PREPARED FOR
UNICEF AFGHANISTAN PROGRAMME OFFICE
AND
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION OF THE ISLAMIC STATE OF AFGHANISTAN

by

Ellen van Kalmthout
Consultant

July 1995

PREFACE

This report is a result of a decision by UNICEF to assist the Ministry of Education in the compilation of a Mid-Decade Review on education in Afghanistan. Reliable statistics on the status of education do not exist. The report compiles available information in order to assess the current status of education in Afghanistan in relation to its condition in the pre-war period, and to identify strengths and weaknesses which need to be considered in any long term effort to achieve EFA goals.

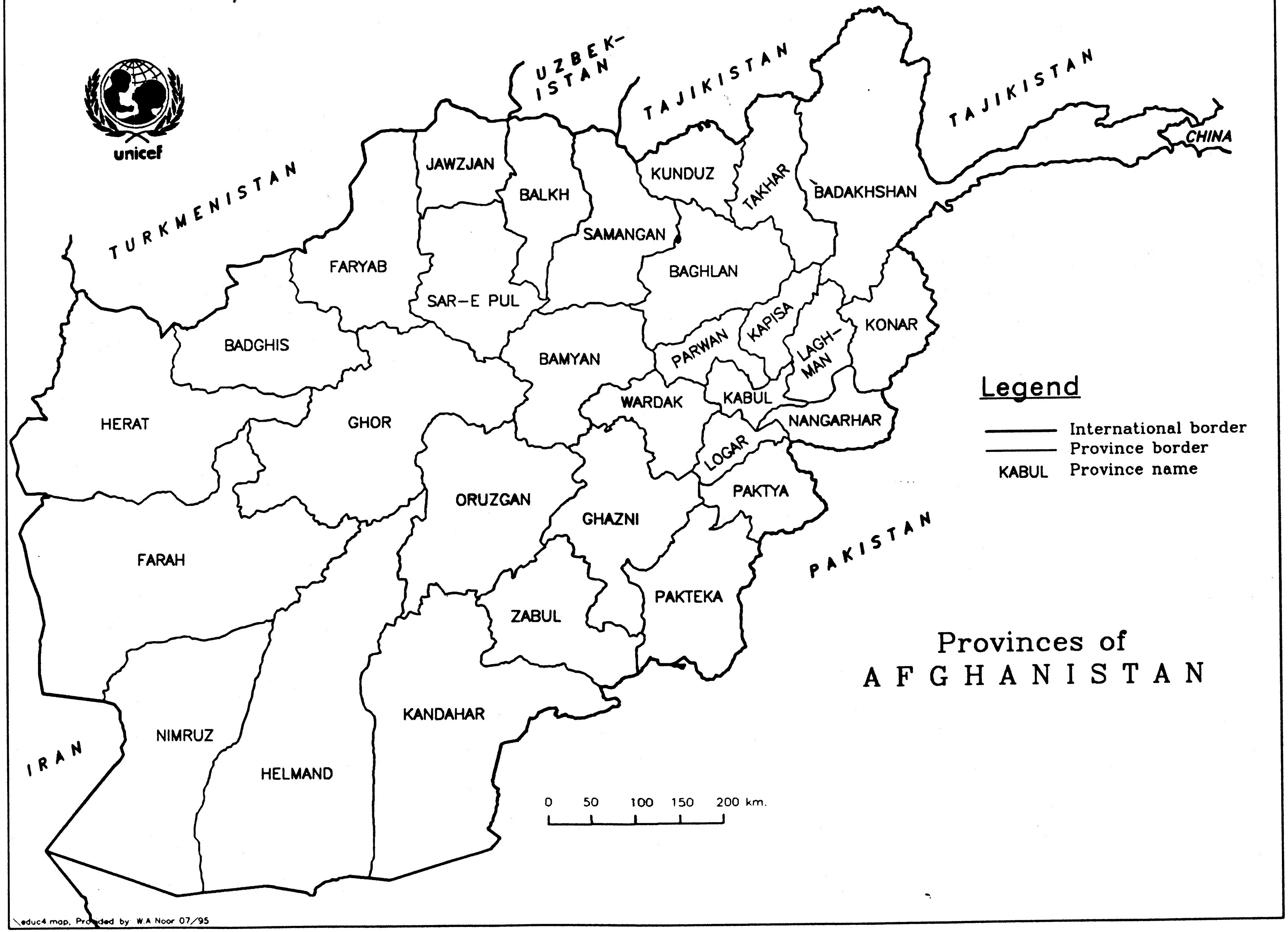
A UNICEF consultant, Ms. Ellen van Kalmthout collected the information and prepared the report[1]. UNICEF wishes to thank Prof. Mohammed Fazel, Minister of Education in Kabul, and Mr. Khawaja Qutbuddin Najmi, Deputy Minister of Education, for facilitating this process and providing valuable insights. At the provincial level thanks are also due to Mr. Ansari, President of Education Balkh Province, and Mr. Bismillah Bismil, President of Education Herat Province. All urged UNICEF to bring the needs of the education sector in Afghanistan to the attention of the Education for All community.

Sixteen years of war have negatively affected the education of children in Afghanistan. However, educational services have survived and continue to function. This is proof of the wish of Afghans to prepare their children for the future. Education has become a national priority for Afghan leaders, small town shopkeepers and villagers in remote rural communities alike. This widespread demand for education is unprecedented in the history of the country, and is a sign of hope.

Nevertheless, the analysis in this report reveals a beleaguered education system. A multitude of factors pose constraints to the smooth delivery of educational services. In most provinces, education is minimally functioning, while in others it has nearly collapsed. At the same time, the Ministry of Education, local provincial education departments and teachers in schools are making efforts to provide education to children under difficult circumstances. Communities are also taking initiatives to establish schools and contribute to educational programmes. Non-governmental agencies and specialized UN agencies provide support to strengthen these efforts.

The challenge for the Ministry of Education and all other actors in education is to set realistic targets and expand educational opportunities to serve more children. Efforts are required to reduce gender and regional disparities. Concerns about the quality of education need to be addressed in order for it to achieve its central purpose of student learning. An opportunity exists, today, to lay the foundations of a system that will be able to meet Afghans' growing need for basic education.

[1] **This report reflects the opinions of the author and are not necessarily those of UNICEF or Ministry of Education of the Islamic State of Afghanistan.**


Provinces of
AFGHANISTAN
Legend
International border
Province border
KABUL Province name
0 50 100 150 200 km.
unicef
TURKMENISTAN
UZBEK-ISTAN
TAJIKISTAN
TAJIKISTAN
CHINA
PAKISTAN
IRAN
JAWZJAN
BALKH
SAMANGAN
KUNDUZ
TAKHAR
BADAKHSHAN
FARYAB
SAR-E PUL
BAGHLAN
BADGHIS
BAMYAN
PARWAN
KAPISA
LAGH-MAN
KONAR
HERAT
GHOR
WARDAK
KABUL
NANGARHAR
LOGAR
ORUZGAN
PAKTYA
GHAZNI
FARAH
PAKTEKA
ZABUL
KANDAHAR
NIMRUZ
HELMAND
\educ4 map. Provided by W.A Noor 07/95

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BACKGROUND

Introduction. Afghanistan has been in a continuous state of war and civil strife since 1978. This has ruined the economy, led to massive population shifts, and crippled an already inadequate, pre-war, social services infrastructure. Afghanistan has some of the lowest social and economic indicators in the world, including those for education. Due to these reasons, the necessary pre-conditions for the implementation of comprehensive Education for All plans are lacking in Afghanistan.

Purpose. This report contains a Mid-Decade Review on Education for Afghanistan. The purpose of the review was twofold:

1) to assess the current status of education in Afghanistan in relation to its condition in the pre-war period;
2) to identify strengths and weaknesses which need to be considered in any long term effort to achieve EFA goals.

The report reviews primary education, Early Childhood and adult literacy programmes. The focus is on primary education, as it is the largest sector and the logical starting point for addressing basic education needs. The Ministry of Education also accords high priority to secondary education and vocational training. These fall outside the scope of this review.

This report is based on the review of secondary sources, discussions with staff from NGOs and United Nations agencies providing education assistance in the country, and by information collected during field visits to two locations inside of Afghanistan. This summary provides an overview of the main conclusions of the report.

CONCLUSIONS

Assessment of the current status. The analysis reveals a beleaguered education system. In most parts of the country the system is minimally functioning, while in others it is on the verge of collapse. The provision of basic education is done in a heterogeneous and fragmented manner, with all programmes suffering from inadequate inputs. Education only reaches a small minority of children. The participation rate for 1993 was estimated at 15.9 percent for the primary level. Girls' participation was as low as 3.6 percent. Most children drop out of school before attaining literacy and numeracy skills.

In order to plan for the future, the following strengths and weaknesses in the current situation were identified:

Strengths
- current relative security and stability in many areas, including the capital;
- Minister of Education intent on revitalizing education;
- conviction by many levels of society and across political lines that education is a priority;
- a broad-based and ever increasing demand for education, including for girls, in certain areas,;
- provincial education departments with strong, decentralized authority ;
- highly motivated teachers in some areas, especially female teachers;
- valuable experiences gained by a variety of agencies with straight forward service delivery programmes, despite the difficult circumstances
- examples of de-centralized approaches to the delivery of education and community mobilisation for education by certain agencies.

Weaknesses
- o government lacks control over certain areas of the country;
- o severe lack of official resources available for education;
- o limited planning, administration, supervision and management capacity of government departments;
- o collapsed provincial and district education administrations in certain areas;
- o inadequate quantity of teachers, having particularly negative effects on rural and girls' education;
- o lack of instructional materials and other supplies for basic education;
- o questionable quality of educational inputs;
- o need for almost completely new infrastructure;
- o social constraints on girls' schooling.

Progress toward EFA goals. Afghanistan's central EFA goal for basic education as formulated in the 1991 policy is to universalize primary education by the year 2000. An analysis of the requirements, elaborated in the conclusions section, shows that these goals are clearly unattainable. This report recommends a reduction of the goal to 50 percent enrolments for boys, and 30 percent for girls. To achieve this goal, the following will be roughly required:

- o enrolment increase of approximately 520,000 boys and 600,000 girls;
- o recruitment and training of approximately 15,000 male and 17,000 additional female teachers;
- o opening of 3,800 additional schools;
- o provision of basic supplies and equipment to these schools;
- o printing of 4 million primary textbooks annually by the year 2000.

These revised goals may also be unrealistic, and will likely be further adjusted. Nevertheless, such targets are needed to plan interventions. This report identified the following key issues for consideration in the planning of EFA programmes:

Quantity issues.

o **Targeting educationally disadvantaged groups.** Currently wide gender, regional and urban-rural disparities exist. Any programme aimed at expanding access to education should be designed to reduce the imbalances.

o **Making the best use of scarce resources.** In a climate of severe lack of funding, priorities have to be set carefully to serve a maximum number of children with a good quality programme. Instructional materials might take precedence over school construction.

o **Increasing teacher supply.** There is a lack of suitably qualified candidates to expand educational opportunities, especially in rural areas and for girls' education. To increase the pool of candidates in order to be able to absorb more primary students in the future, Afghanistan will need more middle and high schools.

o **Increasing training capacity.** The current training capacity is insufficient to produce qualified teachers to expand primary education, and to cope with the backlog of untrained teachers. Cost-effective, in-service options for upgrading teacher knowledge and skills may be developed.

Quality issues. This report calls for simultaneous attention to quality concerns, and focus quality efforts on the central purpose of education -- student learning. Important issues to address are:

o **Focusing the education system.** Currently there are no standards for expected learning levels. Clear and specific minimum learning objectives agreed upon by Afghan educators would facilitate in focusing all parts of the education system.

o **Developing high quality instructional materials.** Improved learning materials are needed. Learning materials are critical in addressing quality as they convey the content of learning and mold the way teachers will teach more than any other input.

o **Improving teacher training.** Teaching quality is poor. Teacher training programmes might be focused more to support educational objectives.

o **Developing education assessment capacity.** An educational assessment programme to assess learning achievement to guide quality improvements is lacking in Afghanistan at present, and might be developed.

The most immediate need is for funding and clear directives. Without funding it will be difficult to extend education. Without clear direction quality concerns might be forgotten. Without a quality programme children will enroll but learn little. There is a clear opportunity in Afghanistan today to build a quality programme for tomorrow's children.